

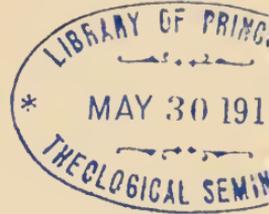


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OUR GRAND OLD BIBLE

OUR GRAND OLD BIBLE

BEING THE STORY OF THE
AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE
ENGLISH BIBLE, TOLD FOR THE
TERCENTENARY CELEBRATION



BY
WILLIAM MUIR, M.A., B.D., B.L.
AUTHOR OF
"THE CALL OF THE NEW ERA"
ETC.

Second Edition



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TO THREE GOOD WOMEN,
BIBLE LOVERS AND BIBLE READERS,
MY MOTHER, MY SISTER, AND MY WIFE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE CALL OF THE NEW ERA :

ITS OPPORTUNITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. With
Prefatory Note by Dr. GEORGE SMITH, C.I.E.

Being a Volume in Morgan & Scott's Missionary Series.
Cloth, 6s.

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'The book will inspire with a new devotion many who above all else desire to witness and work for Christ in the short and swiftly passing day of individual opportunity.'—*The Christian*.

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INTRODUCTION

*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul :
the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the
simple.*

*The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart :
the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the
eyes.*

*The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever :
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous
altogether.*

*More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much
fine gold : sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*

*Moreover by them is Thy servant warned : and in
keeping of them there is great reward.*

*Who can understand his errors ? cleanse Thou me
from secret faults.*

*Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins ;
let them not have dominion over me : then shall I be
upright, and I shall be innocent from the great trans-
gression.*

*Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my
heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O LORD, my strength,
and my redeemer.*

PSALM 19. 7-14.

INTRODUCTION

THE story of the English Bible has often been written, and well-written ; with sympathy and insight, that is, as well as with knowledge. In what follows here it is told from the standpoint of the Tercentenary of the Authorized Version, which has now pursued its blessed and fruitful career for three hundred years. What went before it came, is dealt with only in so far as that is necessary to trace back to its sources this river of God which is full of water, and which has been bringing beauty and fertility wherever it has flowed. What has happened since it came, is dealt with only in so far as that is necessary in order to see how much has grown out of this wonderful version, which is the English Bible rather than an English version, as it has pursued its unique course to the glory of God and the good of men. For its natural strength is not abated ; nor has its fascination grown less as the years have gone by.

Inviting as the theme is, nothing has been said regarding the ancient versions and manuscripts which lie behind our English translation ; and which, in an altogether adequate manner, fill up the gap between the Bible as we have it now and the original autographs which have long since disappeared. There is no translated classic which has such a wealth of manuscript authority behind it as the Bible ; and those who speak as if the existence of various readings, and the like, left us in any real doubt as to what the message of Scripture is in any detail, to say nothing of its message in its outstanding doctrines, must be strangely ignorant of the facts of the case, or weirdly biassed against

the Evangel. Even apart from the manuscripts and versions which are so abundant and helpful, the early Christian Fathers made such liberal use of the Scriptures in their writings, that if everything else were lost which comes to us from other sources, the greater part of the Bible could be recovered from their works. In particular, the whole of the New Testament, except a few verses, is quoted by them in one passage or another.

The English-speaking peoples everywhere owe so much to the English Bible—and especially to that version of it which for well-nigh three centuries was the only version read—that it would be both unseemly and ungrateful were no adequate notice taken of the Tercentenary of its appearance in the land, as a great gift of God to the nation. All through these three hundred years it has been spreading light and life and liberty; and there must be multitudes who are eager to acknowledge their vast indebtedness to it. It has comforted the sorrowing and cheered the downcast. It has guided the perplexed and strengthened those who were ready to perish. It has interpreted the deepest emotions of the believer and increased his gladness. It has led the sinful and erring back to God. And still there are inexhaustible depths of comfort and inspiration and growth, for those who explore the riches of its treasury.

In the vision of the prophet Ezekiel, the river from the Temple, which grew without tributaries, flowed eastward to the Desert and the Dead Sea; and by the same law of spiritual gravitation which prevails in the realm of the consecrated life, this other river of living water from the throne of God and of the Lamb has always flowed down to the wilderness, and has enriched the lives of the needy and poor. Its work, too, has been to make all the land as if it were beside an Engedi; to render the repulsive attractive and the sordid fair; to turn the barren places into the garden of the Lord; and to make the Dead Sea teem with life, even as the Great Sea. 'Everything shall live whither the river cometh.'

It is well, therefore, that those whom this river—

long since too deep except for those who can swim—has so greatly blessed, should walk beside its banks that they may see how marvellously God has led His people, and what great things He has done for them. If our celebration of the Tercentenary is to be worthy of such an occasion, there must not only be emotion, but research ; and the fuller the knowledge is of what God has wrought, the more profound will the gratitude be. If we are to possess the whole land, and give thanks with intelligence, it is both natural and obvious that we should deal, first, with the sources of the river as they are to be found in previous English versions, whether partial or complete ; that we should then consider with greater detail how the river itself arose ; and, finally, that we should look at it as it has flowed down through the ages ever since, in splendour and majesty. To that threefold division there may well be added, as supplement, some reference to the Revised Version of our own time, which will at least do epoch-making service in hearty co-operation with the Authorized Version, however unlikely it seems that it will ever displace it in popular esteem or popular use.

More than any of our predecessors we can say that 'others have laboured, and we have entered into their labours' ; and we shall best show our gratitude to the Authorized Version, and our loyalty for all it has achieved, by entering into the whole of the vast inheritance it has brought us. No true friend of the Authorized Version ever claimed finality for it, any more than finality can be claimed for the Revised Version, or any other. That the Authorized Version may continue to be the English Bible to the end of time, and must always be an object of wonder and delight, can in no way interfere with the Christian duty and privilege of welcoming light whenever it breaks forth, or in whatever way it may come ; since all light is of God, and belongs to those who are His heirs. It is the strong and confident who are truly tolerant and open-eyed, and hospitable to the ever-deepening revelation.

Many saints of God have contributed to the noble inheritance in which we now rejoice ; many whose names

have perished although their work endures, and the list is still unfinished. To the roll-call of fame on which such names appear as those of Caedmon and Bede ; Alfred and Rolle ; Wiclif and Purvey ; Tyndale and Coverdale ; Cromwell and Cranmer ; Rogers and Whittingham ; Reynolds and Andrewes ; Savile and Harding : there fall to be added in our own generation such names as those of Alford and Westcott ; Hort and Scrivener ; Davidson and Perowne ; and other scholars who have had open eyes on all study and research, and hospitable hearts for all truth, and have kept Biblical learning in our land abreast of all the discoveries and progress of modern times. Those who deem it necessary to depreciate the Authorized Version in the interests of the Revised are shortsighted and circumscribed ; while those who think that loyalty to the Authorized Version demands hostility to the Revised are failing in their loyalty to Him who is ever causing new light to break forth for those who have the eyes to see it and the hearts to appreciate it.

Perhaps the best form which the popular use of either of the versions can now assume, is that the two should be used side by side, at least for private study. This can now be literally done, either with the two in parallel columns as they can be had in convenient forms, or in interlinear editions such as are now also in use. To compare the two versions, to trace the changes which have been made in the later version, and to understand why they were made, is to know the Scriptures themselves after a new fashion ; and manifestly the purpose of every translation is to enable those who read it to do this, and thus to bring them face to face with the real meaning of what God the Self-revealer has spoken to men in His Word. This mode of comparing Scripture with Scripture often provides the most helpful of all textual commentaries, and brings the reader nearest to the truth.

Those alone have the true reverence for Scripture, or true faith in its message, who seek always and everywhere to hear what God has said, and to be obedient to the heavenly vision. ' Its seed is in itself,' as the

Word itself has it in another connection ; and those who really trust in it to do its own Divine, saving, keeping work, will never yield to that worship of the external which reaches its climax in those who worship the letter, and make a fetish of the Book itself, apart from what it says. Nor will they ever think of it as if it acted mechanically, as a sort of charm. Marvellous as its fruits have been, alike in individual lives and among the nations, it never works by magic, but always on moral and spiritual lines. 'The Spirit 'breathes upon the Word, and brings the truth to sight.' Little as God needs our learning, He has even less need of our ignorance ; and those alone are truly loyal, either to the old version or the new, who use every means in their power to get at the very heart of the revelation of God in Christ, as it is contained for us in His Holy Word.

It is in the Word itself, therefore, and not in any mistaken views of it, no matter how strenuously these may be advocated, or how conscientiously they may be believed, that our trust is to be placed ; and that version of the Scriptures which most fully sets forth God's actual manifestation of Himself and His purpose of grace among men, in terms which the ordinary man can understand, is the version which will bear most fruit, and which therefore ought to be most heartily welcomed and most widely circulated. Whatever is to be the future relation between the Authorized Version and the Revised Version, and whether—as seems most probable—they are to flourish side by side, history has abundantly vindicated the claim of the former to be a true and adequate representation of the Word of God as set forth in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. It is a representation, indeed, which has far more of the characteristics of an original work than of a translation from another language. What has been claimed with justice for Luther's German Bible may be equally claimed for the Authorized Version among ourselves—that it is rather a re-writing than a mere translation ; a transfusing of the original into a new language rather than a mere version of the letter ; so

deep is the insight, so true the sympathy, so perfect the command of clear popular language. Its ascendancy can only be ascribed to its intrinsic excellence. It is the English Bible. Its authority arises from its Divine right to rule; and to deny this is to be guilty of *lèse majesté*.

Even those who emphasize most the inadequacy of the text on which the Authorized Version is based, and the greatness of the progress in comparative philology and the study of the original languages which has been made since the days of King James, hasten to acknowledge, and that in no grudging fashion, that nothing could have more truly or more impressively set forth not only the meaning but the spirit of Scripture, than it did. Nor are those wanting among students and scholars who go further, and say that such was the spiritual sympathy of the translators of three centuries ago, and such their scholarly insight into the fulness of the Word, that they have wonderfully anticipated in their renderings the truer text to which they had no access. 'The Revised New Testament is substantially 'the same as that of Wycliffe and Tyndale, though they 'lacked the MSS. we have to-day,' says one who is deeply impressed with the superiority of the later text and of its new rendering. The Revisers themselves say, and say it with enthusiasm, that the more they worked with the Authorized Version, the greater did their admiration of it become. 'We have had to study 'this great version carefully and minutely, line by line,' they say in their Preface; 'and the longer we have 'been engaged upon it, the more we have learned to 'admire its simplicity, its dignity, its power, its happy 'turns of expression, its general accuracy, and, we must 'not fail to add, the music of its cadences, and the 'felicities of its rhythm.'

A competent scholar and critic has gone even further than to suggest a happy anticipation of the true text and the true rendering on the part of the translators in 1611. He maintains that 'the Greek of the New Testament may never be understood as classical Greek is 'understood'; and that the Revisers have in reality

distorted passages formerly correctly rendered 'by translating in accordance with Attic idiom phrases that convey in later Greek a wholly different sense, the sense which the earlier translators in happy ignorance had recognized that the context demanded.' Be this as it may, nothing that is said about versions or translations or texts ought ever to be allowed to make us feel that we are removed even by one step from the very mind of God as He has revealed it to us in His Holy Word.

The Bible not only occupies a unique place in the literature and life of the human race, and has some inherent power of its own which no other book has; it bears evidence of having been given in order that it might be rendered into other tongues. It loses less than any other book by being translated; and manifold testimony has been borne to the fact that the Authorized Version in particular resembles a book in its original language rather than a translation. 'The tongue of the Hebrew, the idioms of Hellenistic Greek, lent themselves with a curious felicity to the purposes of translation.' Although it is Oriental in its origin, the Bible is at home in the West as truly as in the East. Other sacred books, like trees, have their zones of vegetation beyond which they cannot grow; but wherever man can live, the Bible can flourish as native to the soil. And nowhere has this been made more manifest than during these bygone three centuries in our own land.

BOOK I

**THE ENGLISH BIBLE PRIOR TO THE
AUTHORIZED VERSION**

CHAPTER I

**TRANSLATIONS OF THE PSALTER AND
OTHER PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE**

'Apart from their own transcendent beauty and universal truth, the Psalms have enriched the world by the creation of a literature which, century after century, has not only commanded the admiration of sceptics, but elevated the characters of innumerable believers, encouraged their weariness, consoled their sorrows, lifted their doubts, and guided their wandering footsteps.'—PROTHERO, *The Psalms in Human Life*.

BOOK I

THE ENGLISH BIBLE PRIOR TO THE AUTHORIZED VERSION

CHAPTER I

TRANSLATIONS OF THE PSALTER AND OTHER PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE

WITH the exception of the merest anonymous fragments, the appearance of translations into the vernacular of portions of the Bible is coincident with the beginnings of English literature. Caedmon 'was the 'first Englishman—it may be the first individual of 'Gothic race—who exchanged the gorgeous images of 'the old mythology for the chaste beauties of Christian 'poetry.' He was a servant in the monastery at Whitby, and was an old man who knew nothing of the art of verse when the gift of song came to him. He had the care of the cattle ; and one evening after he had gone to the stable, he fell asleep, with his mind full of the songs he had heard the others sing, and with his heart sore because he could not sing as they could. As he slept, One came to him who said : 'Caedmon, sing me some song.' But he could only reply sadly, as he had so often done to his fellow-servants, that he could not sing. The Heavenly Visitor, however, assured him that he would sing, and told him to sing of the beginning of created things. Whereupon he began to recite verses to God's praise ; and when he awoke, he found that he could not only remember them, but

could add to their number. More than that ; those in authority who heard his songs declared that heavenly grace had been granted to him, a verdict which won the approval of succeeding ages.

These songs of Caedmon were sung before the year 680, that being the year of his death ; and Bede tells that he sang the story of Genesis and Exodus and many other tales in the Sacred Scriptures. He sang, too, the story of Christ and the Apostles, and about heaven and hell. 'Others after him tried to make religious 'poems, but none could compare with him ; for he 'learned the art of song not from men, but, Divinely 'aided, received that gift.' His poems are paraphrases rather than translations ; but as we read his earnest, passionate words, twice God-given, we cannot but feel something of the awe which fills the heart as we stand at the head-waters of some great history-making river. We can only see him now through the mists of the ages, a dim figure indeed. But his work abides ; and who can doubt that as he sang of the Creation and of Christ, of the joys of heaven and the woes of hell, to the simple folk of his time, his message was owned by Him who gave it, and that many a burden was made lighter and many a yearning met ; that eyes were filled with the love light, and weary, aspiring hearts drawn upwards to God ?

Not long after Caedmon's time we find others working in the field of actual translation. Early in the eighth century, the Psalter was rendered into Anglo-Saxon by Ealdhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury and Bishop of Sherborne, who died in the year 709 ; and by Guthlac, a hermit of Crowland, near Peterborough. Three copies of the former translation, belonging to the ninth and tenth centuries, still survive. At Ealdhelm's request, it is said, Egbert, Bishop of Holy Island, about the same time completed a version of the Gospels in Anglo-Saxon. A copy of this work is still preserved in the British Museum. The records also make mention of Ælfric, Archbishop of Canterbury, of whose translation of the greater part of the historical books of the Old Testament two copies, of date about 1000 A.D., are extant.

There were probably others who did work of the same sort which has not survived, but which all went to make the grand result grander and richer in the ages to come. The stream was still very tiny; but it was of pure water, and it must have refreshed many a thirsty soul. It is significant, too, that then, as now, when the Word was precious to men's souls, they sought to share their joy and their treasure with others, and to let them know the good news at first-hand in the records of Divine grace.

The great name, however, in these early ages is that of the Venerable Bede, with whom English prose may fairly be said to begin. He was a contemporary of the others who have just been named; and it shows how men's minds were being turned towards God, that so many workers were now busy in the field of translation. The story of how he finished his translation into English of the Gospel of St. John has often been told, and will never be forgotten. When the last day of his life had come, the dying man called his scholars to him, that he might dictate more of his translation to them. 'There is still a chapter wanting,' he was told, 'and it is hard for thee to question thyself longer.'

'It is easily done,' replied the dying scholar and saint; 'take thy pen and write swiftly.'

Throughout the day they wrote, and when evening fell, 'There is yet another sentence unwritten, dear master,' said the scribe.

'Write it quickly,' said the master.

'It is finished now.'

'Thou sayest true,' was the reply, 'all is finished now.'

He sang glory to God, and passed to be with his Lord. He was a great scholar, and had brought honour to the monastery at Jarrow-on-Tyne; and he lives for ever in the story of the English Bible. Nor in presence of his love for the Scripture and his yearning that others also should know and love it, can it be too strongly insisted on that a monastery like his had little or nothing in common with the institutions which overshadowed the land seven centuries later. At its best the early

monastery was not a place to which men fled from duty, but a place to which they turned that they might be fitted to follow wherever duty led. It was a Mission Institute, a Training College, a Bible Society, all in one. It was there that the literary treasures which have come down to us from these early ages were lovingly penned, and that the love of letters was kept alive in times of ignorance and continuous warfare.

King Alfred the Great has also a place in this Anglo-Saxon legion of honour ; for when the document entitled 'Alfred's Dooms' was prepared, he put as the first of the laws of ancient England a translation of the Ten Commandments in forcible, simple Anglo-Saxon. He seems also to have set himself to translate the Psalter, which, with the Gospels, was the favoured portion of Scripture then as it is now ; but, between the Danes and other cares of the State, he was never able to finish that work. An interesting insight into the spirit of these old Anglo-Saxon translators is afforded in a homily which has come down to us on 'Reading the Scriptures' ; the work of Ælfric, himself a translator. 'Whoever,' he says, 'would be one with God, must often pray, and often read the Holy Scriptures. For when we pray, we speak to God ; and when we read the Bible, God speaks to us. . . . The whole of the Scriptures are written for our salvation, and by them we obtain the knowledge of the truth.' If such views were at all common, it is no wonder that so many set themselves to make it possible for others, who were able to read, to study the Scriptures for themselves. There is a simple directness about these words, too, which shows that the Mystery of Iniquity had not yet attained the predominance.

The work of these Anglo-Saxon translators, and of others like them who live only in the grand result, was doubtless meant principally for use in the Church service, there being no reading public then ; and they must have cheered and guided many in these early ages. The light would be all the brighter because the surrounding darkness was so dense. The Norman Conquest, however, wrought a great change. The Saxon

manuscripts were despised by the new rulers in Church and State ; and by-and-by they became unintelligible to the common people themselves. In little more than a century after the Invasion, in addition to the Latin Church hymns the Norman population had a prose translation of the Psalms in their own Anglo-Norman, and the French mediæval literature was rich in translations of portions of the Bible. But that, of course, meant nothing for the masses of the English people. Meanwhile, however, the fusion was gradually going on which led to the supremacy of the English language ; and, in spite of all that Bible translation has done to guide and fix the language at every stage in its development, it is probable that Wiclif's Bible in 1382 appeared almost as early as any version could which was to be the Bible of the whole nation, and to retain its place among the English people.

Another influence was likewise at work which may also have had something to do with the cessation of Bible translation among the Anglo-Saxons. Increasingly as Romanism developed on the lines which it still unhappily follows, and sacerdotalism was casting its baleful shadow all over the land, a knowledge of the vernacular Scriptures was regarded with suspicion by the ecclesiastical authorities. As mutterings of dissatisfaction, too, began to be heard among the awakening nations, the influence of the Bible was felt to be hostile alike to the tyrant and the priest. It cannot be claimed for the Mediæval Church that she ever encouraged a knowledge of the vernacular Scriptures. The utmost she ever did was to tolerate a knowledge of the Psalter, of Service Books, and, in the fifteenth century, of the *Plenaria*. These were little books with translations of some paragraphs from the Gospels and Epistles read in the Church service, accompanied by legends and popular tales. It is quite beyond dispute that a knowledge of the Bible in the vernacular, especially by the uneducated, was almost always regarded as a sign of heretical tendencies. In the year 1229, a Council at Toulouse had decreed : ' We also forbid the laity to possess any of the books ' of the Old or New Testaments, except perhaps the

'Psalter, or Breviary for the offices, or the hours of the Blessed Virgin, which some out of devotion wish to have; but having any of these books translated into the vulgar tongue we strictly forbid.'

During the period usually described as that of Old English, from 1250 to 1350, in spite of all the reactionary forces at work, portions of Scripture continued to be rendered into the vernacular by zealous Christian men eager that their countrymen should hear the voice of God for themselves. That it was so often the Psalter which was thus translated may indicate that this was deemed the line of least resistance. Towards the end of the thirteenth century an author, now unknown, made a translation of the Psalms into verse; the language being simple and full of expression. Then, about the year 1325, two translations of the Psalter into English prose appeared almost simultaneously. The one was by William of Shoreham, a country parish priest in the county of Kent; the other was the work of Richard Rolle, known as the hermit of Hampole. The former wrote the Psalms verse by verse in Latin and English; the translation being generally verbal and faithful. The latter had in the first instance written a commentary on the Psalms. This led him afterwards to translate and publish it with an English commentary. In his 'Psalms in Human Life,' Mr. Prothero says that Rolle's work on its spiritual side illustrates one of the movements which led up to the Reformation.

Somewhat later, too, there was a translator, John of Trevisa in Cornwall, who so far as the history of Scripture is concerned is somewhat elusive. He turned the Polychronicon of Ranulf Higden into English verse about 1387; and in the preface to the Authorized Version he is mentioned on behalf of the Translators as one of their forerunners in the good work. 'Much about that time, even in our King Richard the Second's days, John Trevisa translated them—the Gospels, that is—into English.' The first reference to his work as Bible translator is by Caxton in 1482; but whatever he did, it is not certain that any of his work remains.

When Sir Thomas More asserted that it was not the case that Wiclif was the first who carried through a translation of the whole Bible into English for the use of the laity, he added that he himself had seen beautiful manuscripts of the English Bible which belonged to a date long prior to that of Wiclif. This was not only accepted later by a man so learned as Archbishop Ussher, but Henry Wharton his editor, in turn credited John of Trevisa with having been the translator of one of those pre-Wiclifite manuscripts which they also had both seen. By-and-by, however, Wharton came to see that both he and Ussher, as well as More, had been wrong, and that what they had all seen were nothing more than copies of Wiclif's version. There is documentary proof that at the time of the Reformation there were several of these Wiclif manuscripts in the hands of Roman Catholic prelates. Certain it is that neither Wiclif nor the men of his generation knew anything about any predecessor in this field. Had there been earlier versions of the whole Bible in existence, the wrath of the Reformer's enemies because of what he did would have been altogether unmeaning.

For the whole period prior to Wiclif, who first rendered the whole Bible into English and made it the people's book, the state of the case cannot be better summarized than has been done by Professor Lechler of Leipzig, with whose statement this chapter may be brought to a close. 'The whole result for this period, 'as well of the Anglo-Saxon as of the Norman and Old 'English tongue, stands as follows :—

'1. A translation of the entire Bible was never 'during this period accomplished in England, and was 'never even apparently contemplated.

'2. The Psalter was the only book of Scripture which 'was fully and literally translated into all the three languages — Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-Norman, and Old 'English.

'3. In addition, several books of Scripture, especially 'of the Old Testament, were translated partially or in 'select passages, as by Ælfric, leaving out of view 'poetical versions, and the translation of the Gospel of

' John by Bede, which celebrated work has not come
' down to us.

' 4. Last of all—and this fact is of great importance
' —in none of these translations was it designed to make
' the Word of God accessible to the mass of the people,
' and to spread Scriptural knowledge among them. The
' only object which was kept in view was partly to
' furnish aid to the clergy and to render service to the
' educated class.'

CHAPTER II
THE MORNING STAR OF THE ENGLISH
REFORMATION

‘Holy Scripture is the faultless, most true, most perfect, and most holy law of God, which it is the duty of all men to know, to defend, and to observe, inasmuch as they are bound to serve the Lord in accordance with it, under the promise of an eternal reward.’—JOHN WICLIF.

CHAPTER II

THE MORNING STAR OF THE ENGLISH REFORMATION

NO name in all the long history of the English Bible occupies a more honourable place than that of John Wiclif. To him belongs the unique honour of being the first to give the English peoples the whole Bible in their own tongue. He was a great pioneer of freedom alike in Church and State. A scholar and a thinker, he had great influence in all the upheavals of his time ; but above all else, he was a Christian patriot who wished all men to hear the Word of God for themselves and to be free in Christ. It is hardly possible to over-rate the significance of his work, at once for the English people and for the English language. More than aught else, it kept alive in the hearts of the people that irrepressible spirit of free inquiry which led to the Reformation in the sixteenth century. Many are of opinion that Chaucer's 'parsoun of a toune,' so winsome and faithful, was no other than Wiclif, whose teaching the great poet had embraced ; and from many points of view there are few, if any, English workers and writers who more deserve the gratitude of the whole nation.

Wiclif was a great scholar and an ardent patriot, a lover of the Gospel and intensely brave ; but most of all he was a loyal, growing, Christian man. He was a true statesman and man of affairs, wise and conciliatory in all his ways. But he was altogether unyielding where principle and truth were involved ; and modern historical research is showing that his work was vastly more fruitful than has sometimes been supposed.

Lollardy never died out, either in England or Scotland ; and Lollardy was simply the English form of the passive protest against the Mediæval Church, which under various names maintained itself in France, Germany, and Bohemia, for centuries, in spite of persecution. As late as 1521, the Bishop of London arrested five hundred Lollards ; while in 1533, we find Sir Thomas More, in a letter to Erasmus, describing Tyndale and his sympathizers as Wiclifites.

Writers like Professor Pollard and Dr. Rashdall go so far as to say that the English Reformation was native to the soil, and that it borrowed little or nothing from Luther. They point out that in many particulars it followed the lines laid down by Wiclif long before. When, therefore, it is said that Wiclif lived before his time, that does not mean that he was as one born out of due season or that he sowed his seed in vain ; but only that in his case the interval between the sowing and the reaping was longer than usual. 'It is certain,' says Dr. Rashdall, 'that the Reformation had virtually broken out in the secret Bible-readings of the Cambridge Reformers before either the trumpet-call of Luther or the exigencies of Henry VIII.'s personal and political position set men free once more to talk openly against the Pope and the monks, and to teach a simpler and more spiritual Gospel than the system against which Wycliffe had striven.'

Even as regards his version of the Bible, his work was far more influential than has often been asserted. Professor Plumptre, writing some fifty years ago, said : 'The work of Wycliffe stands by itself. Whatever power it exercised in preparing the way for the Reformation of the sixteenth century, it had no perceptible influence on later translations.' But Dr. Moulton has since shown that there is so much in common in language and expression between Wiclif and Tyndale, that it is probable that the earlier Wiclifite renderings had passed into general currency and become almost proverbial phrases. The truth is, as Forshall and Madden, the editors of *The Wycliffite Versions*, put it, that in the Reformation era these versions 'supplied an example and a model

'to those excellent men, who in like manner devoted themselves at the hazard of their lives to the translation of Scripture, and to its publication among the people of the land.' Even yet there are at least one hundred and fifty manuscripts extant 'containing the whole or part of Purvey's Bible, the majority of which were written within the space of forty years from its being finished.' And many of these are full of interest and must have exerted a great influence. If some of them could tell the story of their wanderings and their work it would be a fascinating tale. One belonged to Edward VI. Another was a birthday present to Queen Elizabeth from her chaplain. Another belonged to Henry VI.; and yet another to Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

The exact date of Wiclif's birth is unknown; but it was somewhere about 1324; perhaps a few years earlier. He grew up in his native county of Yorkshire, and studied at Oxford, where he distinguished himself greatly alike as a scholar and as an administrator. He took an active part in guiding Edward III. and the English people to reject the Papal claim to feudatory tribute; and for a time had much influence in public affairs. He incurred the deep enmity of the Romish hierarchy, but there were always friends who saved him from the consequences of its wrath. He advanced step by step in his opposition to formalism and priestism in religion, and to the prevalent corruption in morals. He wrote tracts in English for the common people; and organized a band of preachers, called the Poor Priests, who went through the country preaching his doctrines of grace. And so he was led on to the great work of translation which occupied his later years. He had laid it down as fundamental that God's Word must be taught because it is the indispensable bread of life, the seed of regeneration and conversion. The next step was to see and determine that the Bible must be rendered into the language of the people, so that it might be known everywhere as God's good news of salvation. That was the next step, the natural and obvious step—when once it had been taken; but it had never been taken before, and all

honour to the heroic man who took it, as Wiclif did, in loyalty to the logic of the soul.

It is probable that parts of Wiclif's Bible were issued earlier than 1382 ; but that was the year in which the whole book was finished—two years before his death. It was translated from the Vulgate, the Latin version that is, which had been in use since the time of Jerome in the beginning of the fifth century. The time had not yet come for a rendering from the original Hebrew and Greek. Neither of these languages was at that time taught in the West. Of the actual work of translation, only the New Testament can be assigned with certainty to Wiclif himself ; his friend Nicholas of Hereford being responsible for most of the Old Testament and of the Apocrypha. What is believed to be the original MS. of his translation is in the Bodleian Library and breaks off at Baruch 3. 20 ; while in a second MS., copied from it, it is noted that the translation of Nicholas ended there. It is generally supposed that Wiclif himself did the remainder, and that the work of revising the whole, to which he set himself at once thereafter, occupied the rest of his lifetime.

This revision, however, was a work of time, especially the revision of what Nicholas had done, and Wiclif was not spared to see it completed. The revised Wiclif Bible, which is the standard, appeared in 1388, four years after his death. The improvements in it, which were very real, were essentially the work of one man, the trusted friend of the Reformer and in later years his fellow-worker, John Purvey, whose name will never be forgotten while that of Wiclif survives—which will surely be as long as the English Bible has its place in our land. When their translation appeared, it was most eagerly received and widely read. Although it cost a sum equal to forty pounds of our money, many copies of it were soon in circulation. Many, of course, had to be content with small portions of it ; as, for instance, those who gave a load of hay for a few chapters of an epistle. Touching stories are told of how the people used to gather to hear someone read or even repeat the Word of God in their own speech ; and it is not

possible to estimate how much this first English Bible must have done to keep the fire burning on the altar in these dark, and in some respects darkening, ages. It had been written for the common people, and they heard it gladly; and with the spelling modernized it can still be read with ease. It is said that not many years ago long passages from it were read aloud in Yorkshire, when it was found, not only that they were understood by the hearers but that almost every word employed is still in use there.

It was, of course, a great drawback that Wiclif's translation was from the Latin and not from the original tongues. But nothing else was possible then; and while there is much even in his English which is now archaic, it was the English in which all future English literature was to be written. Just as Luther's Bible stands at the head of the New High German, Wiclif's opens the period of Middle English. Chaucer is usually taken as representative of the Middle English literature; but although he is the father of English poetry and has some rare features of superiority, the tendency among philologists now is to recognize Wiclif's prose as the earliest classic Middle English. Chaucer and he stand side by side; and it has been remarked that Wiclif rises to an uncommon pitch of perspicuity, force, and beauty, in his Bible translation as compared with his other English writings. Doubtless the greatness of his theme inspired and ennobled him all round, just as it was with Tyndale when, a century and a half later, he took up the same great work. Of the later translator it has been remarked that the exquisite grace and melody of the language of his New Testament has been a matter of surprise to those who are familiar with his other writings, which have no qualities that raise them above the ordinary level of the time. Both men made this their life-work, and threw themselves into it, body, soul, and spirit; and the glory of their work and theme pervaded their whole being.

The peculiar glory of Wiclif, however, in this work of translation is not his style or his services to the English language; but that for high and holy ends he

set himself to render the whole Bible into the vernacular. Special portions of it had been already translated for special purposes ; but he was the first whose whole being thrilled with the great conception of the Bible for the people, and for the people's use in their own homes. The special merit of his translation is that at the time it was 'not only the one translation of the whole of the Scriptures into English which had ever been made, but actually by a hundred years the first translation into a European tongue.' It is absurd either for Sir Thomas More in his day, or for Father Gasquet in ours, to deny this. What meaning could there have been in the attack on Wiclif by his contemporaries, had he not been a pioneer?

One Kneighton, a chronicler of the time, writing in all probability before the year 1400, openly laments the translation of the Bible into English, and ascribes the guilt categorically to Wiclif. He maintained that Christ gave His Gospel, not to the Church, but only to the clergy and doctors of the Church, that they might communicate it to the weaker brethren and the laity according to their need ; and he angrily complains that Wiclif had made the Scriptures 'common and more open to laymen and to women than it was wont to be to clerks well-learned and of good understanding, so that the pearl of the Gospel is trodden under foot of swine.'

The theory of the Mediæval Church, that any knowledge of the Scriptures which was necessary for the laity should come to them through the clergy, was all the more intolerable in that, as corruptions increased, the clergy did not know the Scriptures themselves so as to be able to break the bread of life to the hungry multitudes who looked up to them to be fed ; and so often looked in vain. There were only too many ecclesiastics, like the Bishop of Dunkeld, who thanked God that he knew neither the Old Testament nor the New. In England in the year 1551, out of 311 clerics in the diocese of Gloucester, all incumbents of parishes, who were examined as to their knowledge of the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, only 90 passed well or fairly well. No fewer

than 171 of them could not repeat the Commandments, 10 could not repeat the Lord's Prayer, and 9 could not repeat the Creed. Manifestly such spiritual guides were not qualified to be the Scriptures for the people, nor were they entitled to offer their teaching as a substitute for the written oracles of God, as they presumed to do.

That Wiclif was the first who ever set himself to give the whole Bible to the people, or who had in view the needs of the whole community and not merely the convenience of the clergy, is borne out both by friends and foes. In the year 1412, Archbishop Arundel of Canterbury and his suffragan bishops petitioned the Pope to pronounce sentence of condemnation on the heresy of Wiclif and those who adhered to him. In this document, among other charges brought against the Reformer, one was that he had contended with all his power against the faith and doctrine of the Church, and that in order to make his malice complete he had devised and carried out the plan of a translation of the Holy Scriptures into the mother tongue. In the previous year, too, one of Wiclif's admirers, John Huss, in a pamphlet against John Stokes, said: 'It is plain from his writings that Wycliffe was not a German, but an Englishman; . . . for the English say he translated the whole Bible from Latin into English.'

This, then, is the great and assured place which Wiclif occupies in the annals of the English Bible; and even if what he gave the people was only a translation of a translation, and perpetuated the errors which had crept into the Vulgate, it was a great gift of God to his age and his land. In some respects, the measure of its worth and influence—as it shed light all round the circle of life, and roused men both to their duties and their rights—is the greatness of the anger and malice of his foes. But most of all, the measure of its worth is the work it did, and which culminated in the sixteenth century, when the truths for which he had contended proved victorious in so many lands. Wiclif's Bible began a new era in England and for many beyond it, in things political and social as well as in things spiritual and religious.

CHAPTER III

THE COMING OF THE PRINTING-PRESS AND THE
NEW LEARNING

' If thou art merry, here are airs,
If melancholy, here are prayers ;
If studious, here are those things writ
Which may deserve thy ablest wit ;
If hungry, here is food Divine ;
If thirsty, nectar, heavenly wine.

' Read, then, but first thyself prepare
To read with zeal and mark with care ;
And when thou read'st what here is writ,
Let thy best practice second it ;
So twice each precept read should be,
First in the book and next in thee.'

CHAPTER III

THE COMING OF THE PRINTING-PRESS AND THE NEW LEARNING

ALTHOUGH only a century elapsed between the death of John Wiclif and the birth of William Tyndale, the next great figure in the history of the English Bible, these years had witnessed two changes which were truly revolutionary so far as that history is concerned. These were the invention of printing and the revival of Greek learning in Western Europe. When Wiclif's version was made, it had to be laboriously copied by hand, just as Jerome's had been, or as the original manuscripts themselves had been; but when Tyndale's was ready, it was multiplied as if by magic by the new printing-presses. The change was indeed so magical that at first some deemed it had a connection with the black arts; and the Parliament of Paris, after its wont, ordered the books which the servants of John Faust had brought to that city for sale, to be committed to the flames.

Even shrewd men failed for a time to realize how much the invention involved, or the full significance of it in connection with the circulation of the Scriptures. On one occasion, the Bishop of London, acting through an 'honest broker,' a merchant named Pakington, bought up an edition of Tyndale's New Testament, and then was amazed to find that the New Testaments continued to pour into the country as before. When he appealed to his agent to explain the mystery, he replied: 'It were best for your lordship to buy up the stamps

'too by which they are impressed.' But that was just what he could not do. Even Wiclif's manuscripts, as we have seen, could not be quite extirpated, although they might go altogether out of sight; and when it came to doing battle with the printing-press, obscurantism at its mightiest and most malignant was destined to fail. Do what it might with the copies, the 'stamps' remained, and stamps and copies alike could easily be multiplied.

No more epoch-making change than this has ever taken place in the history either of religion or literature; and from the first the printing-press was consecrated by many to the Divine service of multiplying the Word of God. The first book from Gutenberg's press at Mainz is believed to have been the Latin Bible known as the Mazarin, because copies of it were found in the library of Cardinal Mazarin at Paris. Thus did the new art dedicate its firstfruits to the service of Heaven. It is noteworthy, too, that there issued from the earliest printing-presses in Germany many more books for family and private devotion, many more *Plenaria*, and many more editions of the Bible, than were issued of the classics. Twenty-two editions of the Psalter, from which rivulets of blessing had flowed all through the Middle Ages, appeared in German before 1509; and twenty-five editions of the Gospels and Epistles, which were growing in popular esteem, before 1518.

Caxton introduced printing into England in 1474, and immediately thereafter translations and summaries of portions of Scripture began to appear from his press. The first printed book in English in which considerable passages of Scripture appeared was the 'Golden Legend'; and it would appear that Caxton deliberately chose this way of spreading Divine truth as the line of least resistance, and as less likely to meet with the opposition of the obscurantists, who liked the printing-press least when it was printing Bibles. With the special additions made to it by Caxton, it put the English reader in possession of the Gospel story and the whole of the Old Testament narrative. On the other side of the Atlantic, too, the first printed book was the Psalter,

translated into English verse by two ministers, in a rude volume of some three hundred pages.

In Wiclif's time it took a copyist ten months to produce one copy of his Bible ; and when it was ready it cost a sum equal to forty pounds of our money. But within four years of the first appearance of the printed New Testament in English, as many as 15,000 copies were issued ; whereas many years ago it was affirmed that it was in the power of the Oxford Press to print an entire Bible in one minute, with the result that Bibles can now be sold at a price which brings them within the reach of the poorest. At first, of course, even a printed Bible must have cost far more than the poor could pay. But they could get a Gospel or an Epistle or the Psalter ; and there is abundant evidence that all ranks and classes, all sorts and conditions of men, were buying and studying the Scriptures now that they were within their reach.

God never is before His time, nor ever is behind ; and it is more than wonderful how the printing-press came to anticipate and satisfy the needs and yearnings of the awakening nations in their blind strivings after the truth of God from the midst of superstition and formalism, as they could not possibly have been met even a few years before. The Renaissance and the printing-press, indeed, may form a sort of circle where it is impossible to say exactly which is parent and which is child ; and there are many such circles of grace in the history of the Kingdom of God. Just as the marvellous expansion of the means of travel and inter-communication in modern times came when the Churches were beginning to hear anew the Divine command to make disciples of all nations, at once meeting and stimulating their new outgoings ; so the printing-press came when the new sense of nationality was moving the peoples of Europe, and they were emerging from the semi-torpor of the Middle Ages and crying out, even where they knew not what they craved, for the Living God. How much the Reformation owed to the printing-press, and how much the development of the printing-press owed to the spirit of inquiry,

discovery, and reality, which was common to the Renaissance and the Reformation, to the new humanism and the new religion, can never be determined. But no loyal Christian can doubt that God was overruling everything for the good of men and for His own glory.

This coincidence and interaction of great formative forces becomes all the more striking when we see them in the light of the other great change already alluded to, the revival of the language and learning of the Greeks in the West ; a change which also was of supreme importance in the history of the English Bible. The fall of Constantinople, in 1453, scattered the scholars who had had their home and their work there, and sent them westward just three years before the first printed book appeared in Germany. These fugitives brought not only Greek, but Greek manuscripts of the Scriptures with them. As it has been beautifully expressed, 'Greece rose from the grave with the New Testament in her hand'; and the Sovereign Ruler of all guided events so that the new presses were not employed to perpetuate translations of the old and vitiated Latin Vulgate text, but to scatter the treasures of the Scriptures after they had been gathered afresh from the original sources. So much was this the case, that, for the ordinary Romanist theologian, Greek became for a time the language of the heretic.

The new spiritual strivings which ushered modern Europe into being ; the new text of Scripture which appealed to the wonderful zeal for letters which the New Learning had evoked ; and the new means for bringing the world of books, at once the true levellers and the true dividers, within the reach of all who could read ; all met in that wondrous sixteenth century which, as in so much else, was the determining epoch in the history of the English Bible. It is all very wonderful and impressive. The supply and demand were strangely interwoven, and both alike were cause and effect.

One of the firstfruits of the New Learning, and one of the epoch-making events in the history of the translation and dissemination of the Bible, was the appearance of the Greek New Testament under the editorship of

the famous Dutch scholar Erasmus, the most outstanding of the Humanists. That notable work appeared in 1516, with a dedication to Pope Leo X., who gladly accepted the compliment, all unaware as yet of how much it was to do for the consecration of the New Learning, and in claiming the scholars who studied it for faith and freedom in Christ. Luther in Germany, Zwingli in Switzerland, Tyndale in England, and Faber Stapulensis in France, were but a few of the students and scholars who read the New Testament in that famous edition; and what it did for them was typical of what it was doing among the scholars of Western Europe. Many who read it in the interests of culture met their Saviour in its pages. Some who came to it through curiosity or even to criticize, remained to pray.

For us, however, its special significance lies in this— that it was largely through the influence of this work of Erasmus that the translation made by Tyndale was not only the first in English to enjoy the benefits of the printing-press, but was also the first which was translated from the original tongues. Men were no longer dependent on the Vulgate, which in many ways was not very reliable; and the very appearance of such an edition of the New Testament from the hands of a scholar so famous as Erasmus was an incentive to the work of translation which appealed to many. He himself had said in noble words, which also inspired others: ‘I long that the husbandman should sing portions of Scripture to himself as he follows the plough; that the weaver should hum them to the tune of his shuttle; that the traveller should beguile with their stories the tedium of the journey.’ This appeal and ideal must have come home with peculiar power to Tyndale; for when he was at Oxford, he had belonged to the company of learned and godly men who had encouraged Erasmus in his work of preparing a scholarly and critical text of the New Testament.

It is significant that Tyndale’s translation of the New Testament was ready within nine years of the appearance of the Greek edition of Erasmus, just as it in turn had appeared only nine years after a great city

like Paris had got a Greek printing-press. Events moved rapidly in those stirring times ; and it is cause for gratitude that amid all the stir which was caused by the Renaissance in the West, so much of the New Learning was devoted to the study and spread of the oracles of the Living God. Even before the Greek New Testament appeared, indeed, as early as 1488, the entire Hebrew Bible had been printed at Soncino, near Cremona ; there being only one text of the Old Testament, that in our Hebrew Bibles. Humanism led some to intellectual scepticism and moral indifference ; but there were others whom it impelled to search on until they found a more vital faith, and were able to replace the religion of authority with the religion of the Spirit.

In our gratitude for all they achieved in the cause of the Scriptures, it has to be borne in mind that the influence of the New Learning was not all for good, any more than the printing-press was used only for high and holy ends. Humanism was often purely naturalistic, and of the earth earthy ; and the printing-press was often devoted to the service of the world, the devil, and the flesh. Even the life-work of Erasmus was far from being ideal. His edition of the New Testament itself is far from being as perfect as it might have been or ought to have been, in spite of all its significance and the good fruit it bore. He himself admitted that his version was a ' precipitated one,' and the witness is true. In order that he might anticipate the ' lingering ' volume ' of the noble Complutensian Edition of Cardinal Ximenes, which was not published for some time after it was ready owing to delay in obtaining the papal sanction, he hurried through his New Testament in six months ; and according to the late Professor A. B. Davidson, no mean judge, the evil effects of that hurry last to this very hour.

From 1516 to 1535, five editions of this Greek Testament of Erasmus appeared at Basel under his personal supervision ; but with all their value, they had no great pretensions to critical accuracy. In 1520 there appeared the great Complutensian Polyglot, containing not only the original texts of Scripture, but Greek and Hebrew

grammars and a Hebrew vocabulary ; subsequent editions of the Greek New Testament being founded for the most part either on Erasmus or the Complutensian, or on both. Never before had there been such a wealth of material for rendering the Word of God into the vernacular tongues ; and so far as the English-speaking peoples were concerned, the time and the man were both at hand.

CHAPTER IV
GOD'S WORD FOR THE PLOUGHBOY

'Read God's Word diligently, and with a good heart, and it shall teach thee all things.'—WILLIAM TYNDALE

CHAPTER IV

GOD'S WORD FOR THE PLOUGHBOY

LIKE Caedmon and Bede and Wiclif, William Tyndale occupies a commanding position in the history of English literature, as well as in the history of the English Bible. His 'translation of the New Testament, 1525, 'fixed our standard English once for all, and brought 'it finally into every English home.' He held fast to pure English, and we owe our current religious vocabulary to him more than to any other. In his two volumes of political tracts, 'there are only twelve Teutonic words 'which are now obsolete—a strong proof of the influence 'his translation of the Bible has had in preserving the 'old speech of England.' Three out of four of his nouns, adverbs, and verbs, are Teutonic. There were those in his time who declared that the English language was so rude that the Bible could not be translated into it; and his reply was as direct as it was indignant. 'It 'is not so rude as they are false liars. For the Greek 'tongue agreeth more with the English than the Latin; 'a thousand parts better may it be translated into the 'English than into the Latin.'

In many essentials the Authorized Version, when it came, was no more than a revision of Tyndale's Bible; and if there is to be 'honour to whom honour is due,' this must never be forgotten in our rejoicings over all it has achieved. 'It is strange to think,' said Dr. A. B. Davidson, 'that we are still reading his words. 'Many portions of the New Testament, in spite of all 'the revisions it has undergone, are almost Tyndale's

'very words. In some of the shorter books, it has been calculated that nine-tenths are his; while even in longer epistles, like the Hebrews, five-sixths remain unchanged.' Or as Mr. Froude put it, in a passage which can hardly become hackneyed however often it may be quoted: 'The peculiar genius which breathes through the English Bible, the mingled tenderness and majesty, the Saxon simplicity, the grandeur, unequalled, unapproached, in the attempted improvements of modern scholars, . . . all are here, and bear the impress of the mind of one man, and that man William Tyndale.'

'In rendering the sacred text,' said Westcott, 'he remained throughout faithful to the instincts of a scholar. From first to last his style and his interpretations are his own, and in the originality of Tyndale is included in a large measure the originality of our English version. . . . It is of even less moment that by far the greater part of his translation remains intact in our present Bibles than that his spirit animates the whole. He toiled faithfully himself, and where he failed he left to those who should come after him the secret of success. His influence decided that our Bible should be popular and not literary, speaking in a simple dialect, and that so by its simplicity it should be endowed with permanence.' According to the Revisers, the Authorized Version 'was the work of many hands and of several generations.' But 'the foundation was laid by William Tyndale. His translation of the New Testament was the true primary version. The versions that followed were either substantially reproductions of Tyndale's in its final shape, or revisions of versions that had been themselves almost entirely based on it.'

When Tyndale was still a young man, a tutor in a country house, during a heated discussion with some of the neighbouring priests one day at his employer's table, he passionately exclaimed that if God spared his life, before many years he would cause the boy who drove the plough to know more of the Scriptures than the Pope knew. It was a noble ideal which was to be nobly realized, although he had to spend his life and at last lay it down in carrying it out. Erasmus, as we

have seen, had the same ideal after his own fashion ; but with Tyndale it was perhaps more definitely evangelical. Wiclif had had it too, and with him also it was the desire of the man of God to give the Good News to the weary, perishing multitude, which was supreme. These two great Englishmen both held that the Gospel had its message for all, and gave themselves up to the work of bringing it within reach of all in a form they could use and understand. Nor is any kind of evangelism more permanently fruitful than that of bringing men and women into touch with the Saviour in His own Word.

For centuries Rome had kept the Bible from the common people. Even where there is no sufficient proof that this was deliberately done in order that they might be kept in ignorance of the truth, the fact remains that that was the result both of what was left undone and of what was done. In England the ban had been very definite. The seventh of the *Constitutions of Thomas Arundel* ordains 'that no one hereafter translates into 'the English tongue or into any other, on his own 'authority, the text of Holy Scripture, either by way 'of book, or booklet, or tract.' This was directed against Wiclif's translation, which had been severely proscribed ; but it was applied all round.

The popular knowledge of Scripture has so uniformly proved antagonistic to the doctrines and claims of Rome, that it is not surprising that she has never favoured the spread of it ; and it would appear that in proportion as men drift towards Rome in their sympathies and aspirations, their love for the free and unfettered circulation of the Bible diminishes. 'To hear the 'Church was to hear the Bible in its truest and only 'true sense. Was it not an abuse of the Bible to 'send shiploads of copies across the seas to convert 'the nations?' is how one of those who in our own time have come under this tendency, expresses what is truly a striking and illuminating reversion to type. 'The 'recollection of these events should suffice to prove the 'mistake of supposing that the Sacred Scriptures, 'without note or comment, in the hands of all, are

'a sufficient guide to truth ; the Bible thus used is 'not useless only, but dangerous to morality and truth,' is how another of the same school illustrates the same attitude. Yet another has it that 'the crucifix should 'be the first book for their . . . English Home 'Missionaries' . . . disciples ; and the Holy Scriptures 'must never be put into the hands of unbelievers.' When even a tendency to Romanism in the twentieth century gives rise to such sentiments, there need be no suggestion that it is ungenerous to hold that undiluted Romanism in the fifteenth century did not encourage men to read the Bible for themselves.

The unwillingness of the Mediæval Church to put God's Word in the vernacular into the hands of the people, based as it was on the theory that they ought to receive the Divine message through the priests, would have had greater justification of a sort if the priests themselves had known the Scriptures or loved them in such a way as to be able to expound them. But the notorious Bishop of Dunkeld who boasted of his ignorance of Scripture was probably not singular in his ignorance ; nor were the priests in the diocese of Gloucester even in the Reformation era, who did not know accurately the Creed, or the Commandments, or the Lord's Prayer, alone in their incapacity. That such blind leaders of the blind should set themselves to stand between the people and God's message for them was indeed intolerable.

It is full of significance that early in the conflict which ended in the English Reformation a new importance began to be put on the study of the Scriptures. Not only was the spirit of inquiry abroad, but the printing-press was at work to stimulate and satisfy it. Not a few of those in power in the English Church shared in the new spirit ; while many who did not share in it saw that it could not be altogether ignored or defied. In the first set of *Injunctions* to the clergy, issued in 1536, they were enjoined to give themselves to the study of the Bible ; while in the second set, issued two years later, they were enjoined to provide 'one whole Bible of the largest volume in English,'

and to put it in the church where the parishioners could most easily read it. That was the plan adopted by those who wished to meet the new strivings without any drastic reform, and above all without any breach with the See of Rome. Inevitably, however, it only increased the longings of the earnest and truth-loving for changes such as Rome at her best could never allow.

All the Reformers believed that in the Scriptures God spoke to them, as in earlier days He had spoken to His prophets and apostles. In describing the authoritative character of Scripture, however, they always insisted that its recognition was awakened in believers by that operation which they called 'the witness of the Holy Ghost.' Their description of what they meant by the Holy Scriptures is just another aspect of their doctrine that all believers have access to the very presence of God. No wonder, therefore, that a man like Tyndale should set himself to put even the ploughboy in possession of God's Word in his mother tongue. That was the ploughboy's birthright, what he was entitled to as made at first in the Divine likeness; and this was recognized by men of Tyndale's spirit in other lands, so that translations into the vernacular began to appear in Germany, Denmark, Holland, France, Italy, and Spain, as well as in England. As for those who were hostile to all this, it could not but be assumed that they who objected to the ploughboy entering into his inheritance had never found the Word very vital or inspiring for themselves, and had never bowed to its supremacy over all human tradition and everything else which the ecclesiastics had put in its place.

Scholar as he was, it was Tyndale's ambition to give his countrymen an English version which would be more than a translation of a translation, and would render the sacred Oracles into their tongue direct from the Hebrew and Greek originals, which were now at length available for such a purpose. This ambition he was able happily to realize, and although much of his work was done while he was a fugitive and concealed in secret hiding-places, it is of the very highest quality, as has already been shown from the mouth of many

witnesses. There was no royal patronage or historic Jerusalem Chamber, nor any groups of sympathetic and competent colleagues for him; yet no other worker in this field has left his impress on all subsequent work as he did, and what he did can never become obsolete. In one sense his work was actually destroyed. Of the original 3,000 quarto volumes of his New Testament only one mutilated fragment remains, and now lies in the British Museum. Of the first 3,000 octavo copies only two are now known to exist. Yet his work remains all the same, and will remain for ever. At the very time when he was dying for his loyalty to Scripture, in a foreign land, laying down his life that the ploughboy might come to his own, a complete edition of his Bible for which the royal licence was ere long to be obtained was actually being prepared, and about to be freely scattered abroad.

All who have ever taken any part in continuing what he began have been impressed by the splendour of his inauguration of the work. He did not live to see the day of victory, but the dawn was at hand when he passed away. There is no grander figure than that of William Tyndale in all the English Reformation story; and in connection with the Tercentenary of the Authorized Version no name should be more gratefully remembered and revered than his. Its triumphs are in reality his. In a very real sense it is no more than his version revised, as those who have shared in one revision after another rejoice to proclaim.

After he had begun his great work, Tyndale soon found that there was no room in England for what he was doing; and therefore he crossed to the Continent and finished his translation of the New Testament at Hamburg. While it was being printed at Cologne, he discovered that the authorities were about to seize it; and with such sheets as were ready he fled to Worms, where it was ultimately published in 1525. The new volume, so fraught with significance, first reached England in 1526. Every effort was put forth by those in power to suppress it; and it had to be smuggled into the country, where, however, there was no lack of

purchasers. It was read in all sorts of places and under all kinds of circumstances ; read by merchants, workmen, and scholars. Copies were bought up by its enemies, in the hope that the whole impression might be destroyed ; but the effect of that was that Tyndale was enabled to print further improved copies, and to encourage him to go on with the translation of the Old Testament.

In the year 1530, his New Testament was publicly burned in St. Paul's Churchyard, after it had been condemned at a Council summoned by King Henry VIII. Sir Thomas More, with extreme bitterness, attacked it as misleading and inaccurate ; not, however, in reality, because the work had not been well done, but because to him the rendering of certain words and phrases with scholarly exactness seemed 'a mischievous perversion' of those writings intended to advance heretical 'opinions.' Tyndale's fidelity, however, alike to scholarship and truth was not only vindicated at the time by himself, but has been still more amply vindicated throughout the ages ; and the survival of the fittest has ensured the survival of what he did so nobly, so devotedly, and so prayerfully.

In doing his work he made use of every available help ; the Vulgate, the new Latin Version of Erasmus, and Luther's German Bible. But he translated directly from the text of the Greek Version of Erasmus. As regards his work in the Old Testament, it has been denied that he was a Hebrew scholar ; but in his last days we find him writing from prison pleading to be allowed to have his Hebrew Bible, grammar, and dictionary, that he might spend his time in that study. An eminent German scholar, too, Herman Buschius by name, described him as 'so skilled in seven languages, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, French, that whichever he spoke you would suppose it his native tongue' ; and this testimony does not stand alone.

In the year 1534, Tyndale published a revised version of his New Testament with marginal notes ; and two later editions are thought to bear traces of further revision by himself. Before he died, seven editions—

each representing several thousand copies—had been issued ; and there were 'pirated' editions besides. At least thirty-three editions, practically reprints of his, are known to have appeared before 1560. He was not, however, spared to translate and issue the whole Bible. The Pentateuch was issued by him in 1530, and before he died he had got as far as Chronicles with his work. The very year after his death, there appeared what was called Matthew's Bible, but which was in reality Tyndale's. It contained his New Testament revised, and his translation of the Old Testament so far as he had carried it. The remainder of the Old Testament was taken from Coverdale's Bible, which had appeared shortly before, and was actually the first printed version of the whole Bible in English. It, however, was not a translation from the Hebrew and Greek, like Tyndale's ; but from the Latin and German. In Matthew's Bible the Apocrypha was taken from a French translation ; and as that was the Bible which was by and by sanctioned by the King, it may be described as the first Authorized Version. That it did not appear under his name, although so much of it was his work, would nowise have distressed Tyndale. It was not his own glory he sought, but the glory of his Saviour and the well-being of men ; and it was enough for him that the ploughboy and all others who cared to read it had now the Word of God in their own tongue and in their own hands.

CHAPTER V
A RUSH OF TRANSLATIONS

'But whosoever thou be that readest Scripture, let the Holy Ghost be thy teacher, and let one text expound another unto thee. As for such dreams, visions, and dark sentences as be hid from thy understanding, commit them unto God, and make no articles of them ; but let the plain text be thy guide, and the Spirit of God (which is the author thereof) shall lead thee in all truth.'—MILES COVERDALE.

CHAPTER V.

A RUSH OF TRANSLATIONS

IF England in Spenser's days was 'a nest of singing 'birds'; in the days of Tyndale it was the home of scholars who laid their gifts and graces on the altar for the translation and dissemination of the Holy Scriptures. In the years after Tyndale led the way so splendidly, translations came in like a flood. Almost all of them, however, as we have seen, were based on his work—all of them, indeed, which were of real importance—and they are often closely connected with each other; being for the most part revisions rather than distinct translations.

In the year 1534, Archbishop Cranmer, a true friend of the Evangel, persuaded Convocation to petition for an English version of the Bible; and in the following year, Thomas Cromwell, likewise a true friend of faith and freedom, persuaded Miles Coverdale to undertake the work. The outcome was what is usually called Coverdale's Bible, and sometimes also the Treacle Bible, because of its translation of Jeremiah 8. 22, 'Is there no triacle in Gilead?' It was issued on October 4, 1535, with a dedication to King Henry and Queen Anne, which was afterwards changed as the royal consorts changed. Important as it is, however, as the first complete Bible printed in the English language, it can hardly be admitted to be in the full line of the true apostolic succession. It was not based on a study of the originals, but on the Vulgate and on Luther's German Bible, three volumes of which were printed in 1524 and the remain-

ing two in 1532, and which was now pursuing its triumphant career.

'To help me,' he said, 'herein I have had sundry 'translations not only in Latin, but also of the Dutch 'interpreters, whom because of their singular gifts, and 'special diligence in the Bible, I have been the more 'glad to follow for the most part.' But although a translation from the Vulgate had been a great achievement in Wiclif's day, when no better text was available, it was far otherwise at a time when Tyndale was showing every scholar the better path. The 1537 edition of Coverdale's Bible bore the announcement 'set forth with 'the King's most gracious license.' Because of this, as well as because of its intrinsic worth, it had a large circulation. Its circulation was also helped by the fact that it was used at first by the clergy in their obedience to the injunction to put a copy of the English Bible in a prominent place in every church.

In the year 1537, there appeared what is known as Matthew's Bible, which has already been described as being practically Tyndale's. Matthew was in reality John Rogers, who was the first martyr in Queen Mary's reign. The pseudonym may have been adopted to withdraw attention from the fact that his Bible was so largely Tyndale's, his writings having been condemned by the authorities. Rogers was a friend of Tyndale; his literary executor in fact. His Bible may be regarded as the first Authorized Version, although later on in the same year the second edition of Coverdale's also appeared with the royal licence. It contained numerous notes and woodcuts, as well as a considerable amount of matter resembling modern 'Bible Helps.' If we take Tyndale's version as the standard and starting-point, as we should, this may be taken as the *first* revision of it.

In 1539, there appeared what is known as Taverner's Bible, the work of Richard Taverner, another scholarly friend of the truth. Less is known of his version than of any other in that era of versions; but it may be noted that in 1549, an edition of it was published in five small volumes, for the convenience of those who

were unable to purchase an entire Bible at one time. Like its predecessors, it had notes, which were, however, less polemical than those in Matthew's Bible, some of which were vehemently anti-Roman.

In the same year as Taverner's, there appeared what has ever since been known as the Great Bible, because of its size, and which may be taken as the *second* revision in the Tyndale succession. Its pages are fifteen inches in length and more than nine in breadth. It is also known as Cranmer's, because of the preface which he wrote to the second edition ; as Cromwell's, because he had most to do with its preparation ; and in the royal instructions to the translators of the Authorized Version, as Whitchurch's, from the name of one of the printers. By a royal proclamation made during one of the high tides when the study of Scripture was approved by the authorities, a copy of this Bible was ordered to be put in every church. In some cases they were chained to desks ; and a few of these ' chained Bibles ' have been preserved in some old churches. This version was due to the desire of Cromwell and Cranmer, and their friends, to have an English Bible which might become national like Luther's translation into German. It is probable also, and in no way to be wondered at, that the controversial notes in Matthew's Bible were held to disqualify it for this great position. Coverdale was again appealed to for this new service and he was assisted by ' divers ' excellent learned men,' of whose names, however, there is no record.

As a matter of fact, the Great Bible is little more than a revision of Matthew's revision. When it appeared it had a wonderful reception. Crowds gathered round the copies in the churches, one reading while the rest listened or discussed or even wrangled. Bishop Bonner complained that the Bible had become more attractive than the Service, and threatened to have it removed. Before 1541, seven large editions of the Great Bible were sold in addition to many issues of the earlier versions, which likewise held on their way ; and although there was a reaction against the circulation of the Scriptures during the later years of Henry VIII., the short

reign of his son saw at least thirteen new editions of the Bible, and thirty-five of the New Testament. The Great Bible still lives in the Psalms in the Prayer Book, and in the 'Comfortable Words' in the Communion Service of the Church of England.

In the year 1560, yet another version appeared which was destined to play a great part in the stirring times which were at hand; and which may be taken as the *third* revision of Tyndale's work. This was what is known as the Geneva Bible, from the city where it was prepared. It is also known as the Breeches Bible from its rendering of Genesis 3. 7: 'And they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves breeches.' It has several features which commended it for popular use, and it became the Bible of the people as no other version did until the Authorized Version appeared. Not the least of its attractions were its sturdy, lucid notes; and in 1649 an edition of the Authorized Version was brought out with these Genevan notes appended. Fuller says that when they were finally withdrawn, the people complained that 'they could not see into the sense of the Scriptures for lack of the spectacles of the Genevan annotations.' Indeed, as late as 1810, an edition of the Authorized Version appeared with 'short notes by several learned and pious Reformers,' which were virtually the old Genevan notes formerly so much prized.

Other attractions of this Geneva version were the adoption of Roman type instead of the black letter in which all English Bibles had previously been printed, and the division of the chapters into verses. The use of italics was also introduced to indicate those words not in the original, which had been supplied in the translation to suit the English idiom. They were, however, often introduced where they were not required, since the words supplied were involved in the original if not actually expressed. The division into verses, so far as the New Testament was concerned, had been made by Robert Stephen, the French printer, for his Greek New Testament of 1551; but with all its convenience, it sometimes interferes with the sense, and is often very arbitrary. The division into chapters had appeared as

early as Wiclif's time, and was used by him. Some ascribe it to Cardinal Hugo, and others to Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury. It also is sometimes done without discrimination, especially in the Epistles of St. Paul.

The Geneva Bible unquestionably stands next to the Authorized Version alike for its historical importance, and for its accuracy and scholarship. Among those who shared in its preparation were William Whittingham, whose New Testament has a place in the succession, Thomas Sampson, and Anthony Gilby, along with Cole, Goodman, Coverdale, and others, who, like Paul in the Roman prison and Luther in the Wartburg, turned their enforced leisure to good account. It is unlikely that John Knox took part in the work, as has sometimes been claimed. Its version of the Apocrypha, which it is frequently said to have omitted, was largely influenced by a French translation due to Beza. In the original edition there was a good Bible index, a series of maps, and much other prefatory and helpful matter, along with its admirable notes. For sixty years it was the most popular version in England and Scotland, at least one hundred and fifty editions of it having been issued; some say as many as two hundred. In one year, 1599, no fewer than ten large editions were printed. It was the only serious rival the Authorized Version encountered, and was the favourite version of the Puritans. It is noteworthy that it left the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews an open question. The name of Paul is not only omitted, but it is argued in a prefatory note that 'seeing the Spirit of God is the Author thereof, it diminisheth nothing the authority, although we know not with what pen He wrote it.'

The *fourth* and final revision of Tyndale's work, prior to 1611, was the Bishops' Bible, which appeared in 1568. It was due to the desire of Parker, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and others to provide a version which would rival the Geneva Bible in popular favour, and be free from the Calvinism which characterized so many of its pithy notes. 'Its mischievous glosses' were thought to be 'undermining the Church of England.'

The Bishops' Bible was the work of Anglican divines, mostly bishops as the name indicates ; but it is said to be 'the most unsatisfactory and useless of the old translations.' It was so expensive as to be practically inaccessible to the people, and it did not commend itself to scholars. It held its place as long as it did because it took the place of the Great Bible in the services of the Church, and was the only version recognized by Convocation. As early as 1571, Convocation ordered a folio copy to be placed in the hall or dining-room of every Bishop, for the use of his servants ; and also that each church should be supplied with this version. The Puritans, however, never acknowledged its authority or made much use of it.

The only other version which falls to be mentioned is that issued by the Roman Catholics ; and as it, like Coverdale's, was not derived from the original tongues, it likewise is not in the apostolic succession but is of secondary importance, although it played its part in the final result in 1611. It was prepared by the scholars of the English seminary at Douai, who hoped, by the use of appropriate ecclesiastical terms and the addition of notes on Romish lines, to guard readers against error. The New Testament was issued at Rheims in 1582, and the Old Testament at Douai in 1609 ; and the work is spoken of as the Rhemish, or as the Rheims and Douai version. It professed to be based on a greater respect for the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and other ancient translations than previous English versions ; it being roundly declared that the Latin version had been made before the Greek and Hebrew texts had been 'fouly corrupted by Jews and heretics.' It was very deficient in purity of English diction ; but since 1750 it has been brought nearer the Authorized Version ; and since then its notes have also been fewer in number. The late Lord Bute said that it did not commend itself to the English ear ; but on the other hand it must be acknowledged that many of the felicities of our Authorized Version are due to it, and that many of its theological terms, such as propitiation, victim, remission, and impenitent, were adopted by King James's translators.

So the good work of revision and translation went on in a fashion which makes it all the more remarkable that for nearly two centuries and three-quarters after 1611, no further revision was seriously attempted. The truth is that, so far as the English of the Authorized Version is concerned, these frequent revisions had made it such that no further revision on that score could have been seriously proposed ; such had been the satisfactory result of the various revisions of the work done by Tyndale. Had it not been that valuable manuscripts and versions unknown or unavailable in the seventeenth century had come to light and had been so collated that scholars became increasingly able to arrive at a text far nearer the original than was possible three centuries ago, it is more than probable that the Authorized Version would not only still have been reigning among the English-speaking peoples, but would have been reigning without a rival. But as the revisers of 1611 themselves asked, ' To whom was it ever imputed for a failing (by such as were wise) to go over that which he had done, and to amend it where he saw cause ? ' Reverence for God's Word, loyalty to the eternal verities, and patient pressing on in the fullest light we have to Him who is the Light, all involve a readiness to revise whenever the need for revision really comes.

CHAPTER VI

THE BIBLE IN PRE-REFORMATION SCOTLAND

‘Happy, and thrice happy, hath our English nation been, since God hath given learned translators to express in our mother tongue the heavenly mysteries of His Holy Word, delivered to His Church in the Hebrew and Greek languages ; who although they have, in some matters of no importance unto salvation, as men been deceived ; yet have they faithfully delivered the whole substance of the heavenly doctrine contained in the Holy Scriptures.’—DR. FULKE.

CHAPTER VI

THE BIBLE IN PRE-REFORMATION SCOTLAND

SURPRISE has been expressed, and naturally so, that in Pre-Reformation Scotland no attempt was ever made to translate the Bible into the Scots dialect, which even as a literary medium was then different from English. For not only were religious strivings as keen in the northern kingdom as in the southern, and the Reformation more thoroughgoing when it came; there was a great demand for English Bibles among the Scots whenever these were available. It makes the triumphs of the Bible in Scotland all the more remarkable, however, that it moved Scotsmen so mightily even when they read it in a dialect different from their own; and nowhere were its triumphs greater or more enduring.

In spite of the constant feuds between Scotland and England during the Middle Ages, and the equally constant friendship between Scotland and France, there was at times a considerable amount of intellectual and religious intercourse between the neighbour kingdoms. In the year 1365, for example, when Wiclif's influence was at its greatest in Oxford, no fewer than eighty-one students from Scotland were provided with safe-conducts to enable them to go South to prosecute their studies at the University there. That meant that at the very time when Oxford was seething with Lollardy, Scotland was in closest touch with it; and that the teachings of the great thinker and reformer were brought to the North by those who had both the will and the power to commend them. For, naturally, it was the young and eager spirits of the time who came most under Wiclif's influence. Copies of his translation of the Scriptures seem also to have reached Scotland; and

this leaven never ceased to operate there any more than in England, although of necessity it wrought for the most part unseen of men.

One of the outstanding names in Scottish Church annals is that of Reseby, who came North to spread the Gospel light ; and in telling of his martyrdom in 1408, the Abbot of Inchcolm laments that the books of Wiclif were possessed by several Lollards in Scotland, and kept with 'devilish secrecy.' A fate like that of Reseby is said to have befallen another Lollard at Glasgow about 1422 ; in all probability the Scottish Wiclifite whose letter to his bishop was, not long since, unearthed in a Hussite manuscript at Vienna.

At the very close of the same century, too, we meet one Campbell of Cessnock and his noble wife, who had a priest at home 'who read the New Testament 'to them in their vernacular' ; and who, when actually at the stake, were spared, because the King was kindlier than the ecclesiastics. There are few Scottist writers of that period who fail to tell also of the Lollards of Kyle and their interview with King James ; and of the persistence of their doctrines in that region till the dawn of the Reformation. That every Master of Arts in the University of St. Andrews had, by an enactment dated 1416, to take an oath to defend the Church against the Lollards ; and that the Scottish Parliament in 1425 enjoined that every bishop should make inquiry against heretics and Lollards, shows clearly enough that the truth was manifesting its influence. Then in Wolsey's time we find an agent of the Cardinal informing him that Scottish merchants were sending copies of Tyndale's New Testament home from the Low Countries.

It does not appear that the Scottish Parliament as such ever explicitly prohibited the use of the Scriptures in the vernacular by the people ; but as soon as the English New Testament began to appear in Tyndale's time, the Scottish bishops prohibited its being read, and did everything in their power to prevent its getting into the country. The laity were once more assured that it was their part to hear the law of God and the Gospel

of Christ from the mouth of the priest, rather than to read them at home with wicked contention, to the destruction of themselves and others. Sir David Lindsay makes Flattery say to Verity :—

‘Quhat buik is that, harlot, into thy hand?
 Out, Walloway! this is the New Test'ment,
 In English toung, and printed in England:
 Herisie, herisie! fire, fire! incontinent.’

But cries of heresy, like all the other cries of the obscurantists, were now in vain. The time-spirit and the printing-press were too mighty for them. Copies of the Scriptures were smuggled into the country with every ship that came to Leith, and were eagerly purchased and read by those who shared in the new spirit of inquiry which was abroad, and which in so many cases grew out of a great heart-longing for forgiveness of sins and the favour of God. John Knox tells that Henry Forrest suffered for having ‘ane New Testa-
 ‘ment in Engliss’; while one of the charges on which Cardinal Beaton condemned Sir John Borthwick in 1540 was that he had a New Testament in English in his possession. Five persons, too, were burned on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh on March 1, 1539, apparently for no other crime than that they ‘did not hesitate
 ‘to study the books both of the Old and New
 ‘Testaments.’ All through, however, it is the New Testament in English and not in Scots of which we hear from foes and friends alike. It is due to the memory of Alesius, or Alane—a great Scotsman who is not nearly so well known as he ought to be—to mention that he was the first to plead publicly, about the year 1535, before the authorities of the nation, for the right of every household and every individual to have access to the Word of God in the vernacular; and therefore ‘the man who struck the first note in
 ‘giving a tone to that character’ for which his country has often been commended as Bible-loving Scotland.

In his great work on the Reformation, Principal Lindsay says that ‘in 1520, Purvey’s revision of Wiclif’s

'New Testament was rendered into Scots by Murdoch Nisbet, and has recently been published by the Scottish Text Society'; but this seems to have been personal to Nisbet, and not a national affair. John Nisbet, who was hanged in the Grassmarket in Edinburgh in 1685, for his adherence to the Covenant, told how his ancestor Murdoch Nisbet joined the Lollards before the year 1500, and had to flee the country in order to escape persecution. While he was abroad he 'took a copy of the New Testament in writ'; and returning afterwards to his native land, constructed a secret vault under his house, into which he retired to worship God, and to read his Testament. This copy still exists, and is the one which has recently been put into print and published by the Scottish Text Society. Nisbet followed Purvey's revised version of Wiclif's translation, substituting Scots words where that was necessary to make the meaning clear. Only one copy is known to exist, and probably no other was made; as Tyndale's printed edition of the New Testament had by this time come into circulation, and could be more easily used and understood, as well as much more easily obtained and paid for. The episode, however, throws light on the great part which Scripture was playing in the best life and aspirations of that formative epoch.

On March 19, 1542-1543, proclamation was made at the Market Cross of Edinburgh that it was now lawful to all men to read the Bible and Testament in their own tongue; and that none preach to the contrary upon pain of death. Full advantage seems to have been taken of the permission thus granted. 'There might have been seen,' said Knox, writing twenty-five years later, 'the Bible lying almost upon every gentleman's table. The New Testament was borne about in many men's hands.' The Reformer admits that some profaned the Word, and only made a show of reverence for it; but that was inevitable; and 'the knowledge of God wondrously increased, and God gave His Holy Spirit to simple men in great abundance.' And from that time onwards, with occasional ebbs in the tide, just as in England, due to political and other

intrigues, the Bible was the people's book in a very wonderful degree.

The Scots Confession of 1560 shows the reverence felt by the early Reformers for the Word of God, and their renunciation of any claim to infallibility. 'Protestand that gif onie man will note in this our confession 'onie artickle repugnand to God's halie word, that it 'would please him of his gentleness and for Christian 'charitie's sake to admonish us of the same in writing, 'and we upon our honours and fidelitie, by God's grace 'do promise unto him satisfaction fra the mouth of God, 'that is fra His halie Scriptures, or else reformation of 'that quilk he sal prove to be amisse.'

A licence to print the Bible in Scotland, the first of the kind, which was granted on April 14, 1568, to the King's printer, Robert Leprevik, is still extant; but for some reason or another this enterprise was never carried out. In 1575, however, his successor Thomas Bassandyne, and Alexander Arbuthnot a merchant in Edinburgh, were authorized to undertake the work, and each parish was laid under a contribution of £5 to enable the printers to obtain materials—a copy to be given when the book was published, as a return, for the parish church. This Scottish edition was taken from the folio edition of the Geneva Bible, published in 1562; but owing to difficulties between the partners and with the workmen, as well as other impediments, the work was not completed till 1579, although the New Testament bears the date 1576. By an Act of the Privy Council, every householder was bound under a penalty of £10 to have a copy with his name on it to prevent fraud; and searchers were appointed to see that the matter was attended to or the fine paid.

It is an additional testimony to the place occupied by the Geneva Bible, and another indication that it was the version specially favoured by those with Puritan tendencies among the Reformers, that it should thus have been the version chosen for Scotland. Since 1611, however, there has been no Scots Bible as such, and nowhere has the Authorized Version, although translated by aliens and discredited by the auspices under which it appeared, been more at home or more influential.

CHAPTER VII
ON THE EVE OF THE NEW VERSION

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace ; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation ; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth ! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice : with the voice together shall they sing : for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion.'—
ISAIAH.

CHAPTER VII

ON THE EVE OF THE NEW VERSION

THERE was a lull in the rush of translations when the preparation of the Authorized Version began to be proposed. There is no evidence that the men of that generation saw what is so obvious now, after the event, that the time had come for the advent of a version which would be in reality what it had been fondly hoped the Great Bible would be—truly national and accepted and revered by all. In the true succession of the Scriptures, the Authorized Version may be taken as *sixth* in the line; as the *fifth* revision, that is, of the work with which Tyndale had so nobly opened up the way. The line of the succession is, first, Tyndale, 1525; second, Matthew, 1537; third, the Great Bible, 1539; fourth, the Geneva Bible, 1560; fifth, the Bishops' Bible, 1568; and sixth, the Authorized Version, 1611. Important as they are in many ways, neither Coverdale's version nor the Roman Catholic version is in the full line; inasmuch as they were not based on a study of the original tongues, but were merely translations of the Latin and other versions.

The first five in the line, therefore, appeared in little more than forty years; while fully forty years elapsed between the fifth and the sixth. After that, nearly seven times forty years were to come and go before the seventh in the succession was to appear; that is, if succession is the right word, where in all probability there will never be supersession. Revision, where it was felt to be necessary or possible, was always deemed a duty by the truth-loving; after Tyndale had set the standard

in that as in other respects. Just as it was with Wiclif, he had no sooner finished his translation of the New Testament than he began to revise it, and to make it more than ever a faithful rendering of the text. 'The history of the English Bible is a history of revisions. It has been often gone over ; and pious hands have weeded out everything that seemed an error at the time.'

In the days of King James, this duty was still recognized by many Christian scholars, even although Tyndale's renderings had been so often revised that it might seem as if the last word had been spoken. Perhaps it was all the more felt, even oppressively felt, that there were at least three versions still in use—the Great Bible, the Geneva Bible, and the Bishops' Bible ; the second and third of these being largely in circulation. The Great Bible was no longer being printed or circulated, but copies were still to be found in many of the country churches. The Bishops' Bible enjoyed, or suffered from, the support and patronage of the authorities in Church and State, and had its legal place in the churches. As for the Geneva Bible, it was the book of the people, and was very widely used. While a hundred editions of it appeared, there were only twenty of its official rival ; and the full significance of these figures only appears when it is added that, whereas in the one case only eighteen of the hundred editions were folio, thirteen were folio out of the twenty in the other case.

The desire to have one national Bible, free from everything that savoured of the sectarian or the partizan, must have been very widespread among all sections of the Christian community ; more so, perhaps, than in the generation immediately succeeding the appearance of the Authorized Version. Not only were the frequent differences in renderings in the various Bibles in use calculated to lead to confusion and distrust, and open alike to misconstruction and misunderstanding ; there were the sectional and partizan notes ever at work to create a situation which in our time would have been deemed to amount to a scandal. Nor was there any likelihood of either of the two dominant and rival versions

becoming the Bible of the nation, as the Authorized Version was during so many years, and is still. As for the Great Bible, it was too cumbersome and was already antiquated. The Bishops' Bible neither met the requirements of the people nor commended itself to scholars. One sharp-tongued but competent critic had spoken of it as full of 'traps and pitfalls.' The Geneva Bible, partly because of its notes, had become the Bible of a party.

So the conviction grew, as was soon to be shown in the Conference at Hampton Court, that there was no way out of the difficulty but to seek some new version which would be acceptable to all, because it was without partiality or bias ; absolutely independent of party, and altogether loyal to the text. If only that could be done, as the result showed it could be done, the gain all round would be immense. And the day was at hand which in God's good providence was to witness the appearance of such a version : of a Bible which was to be the Bible of the whole nation ; a Bible around which every section could gather in unity of attachment ; the English Bible, which for these three centuries bygone has so wonderfully stood all the tests of time.

BOOK II

THE COMING OF THE AUTHORIZED
VERSION

CHAPTER I

KING JAMES'S SHARE IN THE WORK

How fruitful are the seeming barren places of Scripture : bad ploughmen which make balks of such ground. Wheresoever the surface of God's Word doth not laugh and sing with corn, there the heart thereof within is mercy, with mines affording, where not plain matter, hidden mysteries.'—
THOMAS FULLER.

BOOK II
**THE COMING OF THE AUTHORIZED
VERSION**

CHAPTER I

KING JAMES'S SHARE IN THE WORK

IT was only natural that the English Puritans should hail the accession of James the Sixth of Scotland to the English throne with high expectations. He had repeatedly declared his adherence to the Presbyterianism with which they had so much in common, and in which he had been educated. He had publicly avowed his gratitude that he belonged to the purest Church in Christendom. He had solemnly promised to maintain its principles as long as he lived. He had given them cause to anticipate that his sympathies would be with them and their contentions in the conflict which was already dividing the English Church.

Very naturally, therefore, they approached him on his triumphal progress southwards, with what has been called the Millenary Petition ; asking for the removal of various abuses and superstitious elements which according to them had either crept into the Reformed Church, or had never been got rid of at the Reformation. There were, of course, others who did not agree with their attitude, and many attempts were made, alike in public and in private, to win the favour of the new King for other interests than those of Puritanism in the making. James's reply to these various representations was the famous Hampton Court Conference, which was held in

January, 1604, and which was ostensibly summoned to consider the whole ecclesiastical situation, and to discuss the matters which were in dispute ; to hear and determine ' things pretended to be amiss in the Church.'

We are concerned with the Conference now, however, only because of the proposal made at it, somewhat unexpectedly and even casually it would appear, and which was ultimately agreed to, that there should be a new translation of the Bible into English. For the rest, the Conference was far from being a happy or auspicious gathering. To begin with, the party with Puritan tendencies, those ' of pious straitened consciences,' as Carlyle describes them, were put into a small minority ; while James was true to himself as pedant and petty tyrant, the ' wisest of fools,' but still a fool. He addressed those who dared to differ from him as ' dunces fit to be ' whipped ' ; although they were among the most learned and highly respected men of the time—' four world-famous Doctors, from Oxford and Cambridge ' ; and generally he was as unlike a just and impartial king and chairman as it was possible for even him to be. ' I will make them conform,' he said of the remonstrants, ' or I will harry them out of the land.' As against the four representatives of the objectors—Dr. Reynolds, Dr. Sparke, Mr. Knewstubbs, and Mr. Chaderton—there were fourteen representatives from the other side, an archbishop, eight bishops, and five deans.

The suggestion that there should be a new translation was made by Dr. Reynolds, the President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He did not make it, however, on the ground which might have appealed to all parties, that the need for one uniform version which would be acceptable to every section of the Church was very urgent in the interests of religion as well as of peace. Instead of that, he based it on certain faulty renderings in all the versions in use, which made them ' corrupt and ' not answerable to the truth of the original ' ; and Bishop Bancroft, of London, seems to have expressed the general feeling of the Conference when he replied that ' if every man's humour were to be consulted, there ' would be no end of translating.' But for the interven-

tion of the King, indeed, it is probable that the matter would have dropped. James, however, was now in his element, and intervened to some purpose, and declared that he would see the matter through.

In a speech which is still preserved, he condemned all the current translations as unsatisfactory; and with much parade of his undoubted and unusual learning set forth how such a work as that proposed ought to be done. In particular, he denounced the Geneva Bible as the worst of all the versions in use; mainly because of its marginal notes, which he declared were 'very 'partial, untrue, seditious, and savoured too much of 'dangerous and traitorous conceits.' He singled out two of these notes as specially obnoxious to him: that on Exodus 1. 19, where disobedience to kings is said to be lawful; and that on 2 Chron. 15. 16, where Asa is condemned for deposing his mother instead of putting her to death. He professed that he knew of these notes from a copy of the Geneva Bible which an English lady had given him; but, as a matter of fact, he had used no other version since he was a boy, and had published disquisitions on part of it. As for the notes, he had known them also for long; for they had often been applied to current politics by the outspoken Scottish Presbyterians whom he had had to endure, and whom he was now determined to silence if he could.

It ought to be stated that this account of the proceedings, which we owe to Dr. Barlow, who was an eye-witness, differs somewhat from that given in the Translators' Preface to the Authorized Version. But these accounts are not really contradictory, and both alike run the beginning of the enterprise back to the complaints of the Puritans and the decision of the King. It may be claimed, therefore, for King James that it was due to him that the good work was begun which resulted in the appearance of the Authorized Version three centuries ago. When Convocation met shortly after the Conference not a word seems to have been said about a new translation, and the driving-power appears to have come solely from the King. Bancroft said, later on in that same year: 'I am persuaded his royal mind rejoiceth more

'in the good hope which he hath for a happy issue of that work, than of his peace concluded with Spain.' It may also be claimed for James that all the arrangements for which he was responsible were admirably made. He was a man of capacity, and had a strong sense of the responsibilities of his office as well as a readiness to work hard.

As for the motives which induced him to enter so heartily on this great undertaking, it is not possible to speak with certainty. Nor is it necessary to inquire very closely. Probably his motives were mixed, like those of other men; but one thing is certain, that he was led by no love for the Word of God, nor by any desire to secure its circulation among his subjects. He was shrewd enough to see that a new translation under his learned and royal auspices would add greatly to the glory of his reign. It is, indeed, the only glorious thing connected with his shifty and unworthy rule and his ambiguous career. The very discussion of such a subject attracted him, too, and to do him justice, his powers of administration and application were far from inconsiderable. He was also inordinately fond of displaying his learning, especially in connection with theology; and a project of this sort promised him abundance of scope in that direction. But he was a thoroughly despicable man all the same, and in no way entitled to have his name bound up all through the ages with an enterprise so holy. In spite of all the inconsistencies of which human nature is capable—and he was not wholly evil any more than others—it is hardly conceivable that he had any desire to spread Divine truth for its own sake throughout his dominions. Yet he had been a translator of the Scriptures himself. In 1634, Charles the First sanctioned a version of the Psalter to which his father is said to have contributed thirty psalms; but those who sang the metrical psalms obstinately preferred the Psalter printed in 1564 by the Scottish Reformers and introduced by Knox.

Dr. Hume Brown, the latest and most judicial of Scottish historians, says that 'in his dealings alike with Highland chiefs and Presbyterian clergy, he so often

'displayed a petty malice, a malignity, and a deliberate cruelty, that we are bound to conclude that these vices were of the essence of his nature.' Another Scottish historian says that 'he was vindictive, accessible to the most fulsome flattery, and extremely conceited.' Mr. Green says that 'his shrewdness and learning only left him, in the phrase of Henry the Fourth, the wisest fool in Christendom'; and that 'the immorality of James's Court was hardly more despicable than the imbecility of his government.' It would appear that he actually made money out of the translation, by adding a Bible monopoly to the others which then flourished, and which did so much to demoralize and disturb the trade of the country. Students of heredity who remember that our Charles the Second and James the Second had Henry the Fourth of France as their other grandfather, may well see where their vices came from; and James's contribution to the terrible sum-total was as great as that of Henry, who bought Paris with a Mass, and treated the Seventh Commandment as if it were a dead letter. James was essentially a weakling; his weakness led him into much double-dealing and gross wickedness; and there can be little doubt that, such as it is, Sir Walter Scott's portraiture of him in *The Fortunes of Nigel* is far too favourable.

It is undoubted that he felt the sting of some of the outspoken notes appended to the Geneva Bible. They ran counter to his most inveterate convictions and prejudices. But what is remarkable is that a man so shrewd in many ways did not see that the text of Scripture was far harder on a life like his than any such notes could be; and that it spoke with an authority to which the notes never aspired. Gibbon says that when Ulfilas was preparing his version of Scripture for the Goths 'he prudently suppressed the four Books of Kings, as they might tend to irritate the fierce spirit of the barbarians.' So our British Solomon might have had qualms as to what a nation of Bible-readers would think of his doctrine of the Divine right of kings, which in practice set the Stewarts not only above criticism, but above the moral law of

God as well as above the law of the land. That he should patronize a book which told the story of Nathan and David, of Naboth and Ahab, and much else which made for liberty, and has made Stewart tyranny long since impossible in the English-speaking lands, is indeed passing strange. For the rest, he was more than repaid for the help he gave and the services he undoubtedly rendered, by the Dedication which has carried his name and his fame into many a home where otherwise they would have been unknown.

As for that Dedication itself and the sentiments therein set forth, perhaps all that need be said here is that in our estimate, regard must be had to the practice of the age in such matters. To us it seems not only fulsome, but altogether out of place as a preface to the Word of God ; where no man should be exalted in this way, even if he had been as good and great as James was erroneously declared to be. When the Geneva Bible appeared, the frank and straightforward address to Queen Elizabeth, which occupied twenty-eight folio pages, was a very different document from the flattery addressed to her ignoble successor, as well as from the earlier dedications which had been addressed to her father, the quondam Defender of the Faith. As for the Bishops' Bible, although it was official as the Authorized Version was never destined to be, it had no dedicatory address of any kind, apart from Archbishop Parker's prologue ; which, however, occupied five closely-printed folio pages by way of applying the words 'search the Scriptures,' and describing what led to the preparation of the new version. The men of 1611, however, were not content with that ; but prepared a document which contains much which in the light of historical research is now known to be untrue, alike as regards the public policy and the private character of the monarch to whom it was addressed. And even if it be the case that his learning was great and, thanks to George Buchanan, of a character uncommon in a king, his immediate predecessors on the English throne had both been highly accomplished.

Great thinkers and scholars, however, like Erasmus

and Bacon, indulged in grovelling and false dedications of their works to men equally unworthy. Sometimes they even addressed the powerful and rich, in what seem to us most abject and degrading terms, in order to obtain appointments and money gifts. And the whole atmosphere was laden with sycophancy in James's time. At the Hampton Court Conference, the aged Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury though he was, declared with rapture that King James had undoubtedly spoken by the special assistance of God's Spirit; while Bancroft, who was soon to be Archbishop, fell on his knees before James, and cried out that there had been no such king since Christ's time. The temporal lords, too, applauded His Majesty's speeches as proceeding from the Spirit of God, and from an understanding heart. Yet even they must have known, and known it better than many of the translators, that he was cowardly and profane, perhaps drunken and worse; and in no sense one whom the honourable and pure could applaud either as man or monarch, although they thus grovelled before him in the dust. Coke, his attorney-general, once extolled James as 'Divinely illumined by Almighty God, and like an angel of God.' Selden, too, spoke of the royal interpretation of some parts of the Apocalypse as 'the clearest seen among the lesser lights, and a performance most Divine and kingly.'

Nor should it be forgotten, if we would rightly appreciate the atmosphere in which the Dedication to James was begotten, that there were many then who really believed in the Divine right of kings to rule, in the sense in which the Stewarts asserted it. James himself declared that 'as it is atheism and blasphemy to dispute what God can do, so it is presumption and a high contempt in a subject to dispute what a king can do, or to say that a king cannot do this or that.' Not only so; but Convocation in its Book of Canons denounced as a fatal error the assertion that 'all civil power, jurisdiction, and authority, were first derived from the people and disordered multitude; or either is originally still in them, or else is deduced by their consent naturally from them, and is not God's

' ordinance originally descending from Him and depending upon Him.' It was even asserted in these servile days that ' the King is above law by his absolute power ' ; and that ' notwithstanding his oath, he may alter and suspend any particular law that seemeth hurtful to the public estate.' Passive obedience to the monarch, no matter who he was, was inculcated as a religious obligation by many who ought to have known better.

Compared with much of this, the Dedication, such as it is, seems moderate and careful in tone ; and its limitations are those of the generation which produced it, and to which if possible it ought to have been confined. For after every allowance has been made, it cannot but be felt that, in loyalty to the Book to which it was attached, the Dedication might well have disappeared ; especially when the Preface, which is so admirable and valuable, soon ceased to appear in ordinary editions. Had it been the Preface which was retained instead, great gain would have resulted ; as the study of it is little short of a liberal education for those who undertake it with open eyes and responsive hearts ; and it is satisfactory that more attention is now being directed to it.

Then, finally, in this connection it ought to be borne in mind that the Puritan element in the community, which had been very inadequately represented among the translators to begin with, was hardly represented at all when the Dedication was written. Of their accredited spokesmen, Reynolds, Lively, and Chaderton, only the last-named survived till 1611 ; and more than one reference in the Preface shows that the translators were anxious to have it understood that they were altogether free from the new spirit which was beginning to manifest itself so vigorously, and was soon to lead to Civil War.

CHAPTER II
THE TRANSLATORS

'I have carefully and regularly read the Holy Scriptures, and I am of opinion, that this volume, independently of its Divine origin, contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been composed.'—SIR WILLIAM JONES.

CHAPTER II

THE TRANSLATORS

ON July 22, 1604, King James announced to Bancroft, Bishop of London, who then represented the See of Canterbury, that he had appointed 'certain learned men, to the number of four-and-fifty, for the translation of the Bible.' He also directed him to 'move the bishops to inform themselves of all such learned men within their several dioceses, as, having especial skill in the Hebrew and Greek tongues, have taken pains in their private studies of the Scriptures for the clearing of any obscurities either in the Hebrew or the Greek, or touching any difficulties or mistakings in the former English translations, which we have now commanded to be thoroughly viewed and amended; and thereupon to earnestly charge them, signifying our pleasure therein, that they send such their observations to Mr. Lively, our Hebrew reader in Cambridge, or to Dr. Harding, our Hebrew reader in Oxford, or to Dr. Andrewes, Dean of Westminster, to be imparted to the rest of their several companies, that so our intended translation may have the help and furtherance of all our principal learned men within this our kingdom.'

Bancroft was likewise instructed to provide for the recompense of the translators by means of Church preferment. Whenever 'a living of twenty pounds' became vacant, His Majesty was to be informed of the circumstance, that he might recommend one of the translators to the patron. The Bishop was further directed to arrange for the immediate expenses of the

undertaking ; for although His Majesty was very ready to meet these himself, 'of his most princely disposition,' 'some of my lords, as things now go, had held it 'inconvenient.' The various bishops and chapters were encouraged to contribute towards the work by the assurance that His Majesty would be acquainted with every man's liberality. As a matter of fact, many of the translators did receive high promotion in the Church ; while Savile, the only layman amongst them, was made a knight.

This seems to have been all that James ever did, so far as the expenses of the work were concerned. Apart from free entertainment in the colleges, all that any of the translators themselves appear to have received was the sum of thirty shillings a week ; which, according to one account, was paid by the Company of Stationers to each of the scholars engaged in the final revision. According to another account, the expenses were met by Barker, the royal printer and patentee, who paid the sum of £3,500 for that purpose. In this, however, as in so much else connected with this whole undertaking, it is surprising how little definite information has come down to us. 'Never,' says Dr. Scrivener, who knows all that is to be known on the subject, 'was a great enterprise like the production of 'our Authorized Version carried through with less knowledge handed down to posterity of the labourers, their 'method, and order of working.' It is not known that any of the correspondence connected with the progress of the work, or any minute of the meetings held, is still extant. We have no authentic contemporary history of its preparation, nor any manuscript indubitably containing the translators' words, nor any copies of the Bible in the transition stage.

It is usually held that it was three years after the King's letter to Bancroft, following close as it did on the Hampton Court Conference, before the actual work of the translators was begun. It is possible, however, that it was the revision which was begun in 1607 ; and it seems fairly certain some of the translators were at work as early

as the spring of 1605. Of the fifty-four who were nominated in 1604, only forty-seven are known as sharing in the work. Mr. Lively, who was reputed 'one of the best linguists in the world,' died in 1605; while Dr. Reynolds, who first suggested the enterprise at Hampton Court, died in 1607; and there may have been other changes. Documentary evidence of other helpers has also come to light in recent years. Dr. John Aglionby, Principal of St. Edmund's Hall; Dr. Leonard Hutton, Canon of Christ Church; Arthur Lake, or Lakes, afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells; John Harnar; and Dr. George Ryves, Warden of New College, all seem to have shared in the great work.

The work was entrusted to six companies, of which two met at each of the three centres, Westminster, Oxford, and Cambridge, under the superintendence of the Dean of Westminster and the two University Hebrew professors. It was intended that the work of each of these companies should be gone over by the other five, but there is nothing to show that this was done; and in the absence of this the final revision by a small committee who met for nine months in London to prepare the book for the press was not sufficient to prevent a certain inequality in the execution of the several portions of the translations. Job and the Psalms, for example, are not so helpfully rendered as the Pentateuch. The Epistles are not so well done as the Gospels and the Acts; while the Apocrypha is the least successful part of all. It is ungrateful work, however, to try to find spots on the sun; and every page of their work calls forth the admiration of the reader. Perhaps the very perfection of their style consists in the fashion in which they make the reader forget all about style, and realize that he is hearing the Word of the Lord Himself.

The first company, which consisted of ten members, met at Westminster, and was presided over by the Dean, Dr. Lancelot Andrewes, afterwards Bishop of Winchester; of whom it was said that he might have been 'interpreter-general at Babel.' Many considered him the most learned man in England. This company also

included Overall, then Dean of St. Paul's, and Adrian de Savaria, by birth a Fleming and at that time Prebendary of Westminster ; but best known as the bosom friend and spiritual counsellor of Richard Hooker. As Scrivener remarks, this company's share of the work—from Genesis to Second Kings—may seem an easy one ; but the eminent success of the whole enterprise is largely due to the simple dignity of their style, and to the mingled prudence and boldness wherewith they so blended together the idioms of two very diverse languages, that the reader is almost tempted to believe that the genius of his native tongue must have some subtle affinity with the Hebrew.

The second company, which was composed of eight members, met at Cambridge, and had from 1 Chronicles to Ecclesiastes as their share. They suffered an irreparable loss in the death of Edward Lively, who was to have presided over them, before their work was well begun. It would appear, too, that his successor as Regius Professor of Hebrew also died a year later ; and their translation is usually considered to be less satisfactory than that of the other Canonical books of the Old Testament. The third company, seven in number, met at Oxford, and translated from Isaiah to the end of the Old Testament. They were presided over by the University Hebrew professor, and had also amongst them Dr. Richard Kilbye, Rector of Lincoln College, whose testimony to the anxious pains with which they did their work has been preserved by Isaac Walton. In spite of the difficulty of their task, what they did is of surpassing merit.

The fourth company, which also consisted of seven members, met in Cambridge under the presidency of Dr. Duport, who was four times elected Vice-Chancellor of his University. The translation of the Apocrypha was assigned to them, and they were the first to complete their share of the work, as well as the least happy in their execution of it. The fifth company, eight in number, which met at Oxford under the presidency of Dr. Ravis, Dean of Christchurch and Vice-Chancellor of the University, had the Gospels, the Acts, and the Apocalypse as their portion ; while, finally, the Epistles

were entrusted to the sixth company, which met at Westminster and was presided over by Dr. Barlow, Dean of Chester, and chronicler of the Hampton Court Conference. It had seven members.

Others of the translators of whom something is known were Sir Henry Savile, Warden of Merton, then the most famous Greek scholar in England, who served on the second Oxford company ; Mr. Bois, Fellow of St. John's, who with Savile is said to have represented scholarship free from any party, whether High Church or Puritan, and who was transferred to the first Cambridge company after he had finished his work on the second Cambridge company ; Dr. Chaderton, Master of Emmanuel, one of the four Puritan leaders at Hampton Court, and who was 'grave, godly, learned, familiar 'with the Greek and Hebrew tongues, and the numerous 'writings of the Rabbis' ; Andrew Downs, described as 'one composed of Greek and industry' ; Dr. Bedwell, the greatest Arabic scholar in Europe ; and Dr. Miles Smith, who is understood to have written the Preface ; and who, along with Dr. Thomas Bilson, Bishop of Winchester, whose name does not appear in any list of the six companies, made the final revision of the work, and saw it through the press. No place was found on any of the companies for Hugh Broughton, the great Hebraist, who had sketched a plan for a new version ; but his printed translations of parts of the Old Testament were not without influence on the translators. It is supposed that he was excluded partly because of his violent overbearing temper, and partly because of the dislike with which both Whitgift and Bancroft regarded him ; and when the Authorized Version finally appeared, he attacked it with great ferocity.

The translators were occupied for two years and nine months on their work, and never perhaps was time better spent. They left nothing undone, and spared themselves no toil in their determination to make their work as perfect as it could possibly be. They studied the original Hebrew and Greek. They had all the other modern translations before them for their guidance. They went over the commentaries of the great scholars. And

then when they had discovered the exact meaning of each passage, they did everything in their power to express it in clear, vigorous, idiomatic English. Even translations which were defective in many respects were ransacked for illuminating words and expressive phrases, that nothing might be lost.

Besides all this, they exercised their own independent judgment all through with singular wisdom and insight. The pervading spirit in their completed work is undoubtedly that of Tyndale, but the final outcome is their own. They wove their own original renderings so skillfully with all that was worthiest and truest in other versions, and so wonderfully conformed their English to the sense of the Hebrew and Greek, that the very idioms of the original enter into the thought and emotion of the ordinary reader. The dialect of the Authorized Version is as near men's minds as their own speech. To all intents and purposes, the result of their consecrated labours was a book which has none of the drawbacks of a translation and all the power of an original work. As they sent it forth, the Authorized Version has been a book which has interpreted every emotion and every experience ; a book for the joyous and for the sad ; a book for the perplexed and for those on the primrose pathway ; a book which inspires to deeds of self-sacrifice and self-surrender, and gives new strength to the tempted and the tried. It has been the light and life of countless thousands.

CHAPTER III
THEIR INSTRUCTIONS AND HOW THEY
UNDERSTOOD THEM

'The Scriptures manifest themselves to be the Word of God by their majesty and purity: by the consent of all the parts and the scope of the whole, which is to give all glory to God: by their light and power to convince and convert sinners, to comfort and build up believers unto salvation: but the Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in the heart of man is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very Word of God.'—THE LARGER CATECHISM.

CHAPTER III

THEIR INSTRUCTIONS AND HOW THEY UNDERSTOOD THEM

THE Rules which were drawn up for the guidance of the translators may well be detailed here ; not only for their own sake, but because of the light which they throw on the work. It is not known who drew them up, but probably they passed through several hands, including the King's, and they are admirable in almost every respect.

'Rule I.—The ordinary Bible read in the church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit.'

It may have been inevitable from its official position that the Bishops' Bible should thus get a place it by no means deserved, and be put in the forefront as the basis and starting-point of the translators' work ; but it was so in form rather than in reality. As a matter of fact, the Geneva version throughout, and even the Rheims New Testament, were more used in the final result than the version thus preferred. Yet this first instruction was obeyed in the best sense. As few changes as possible were made on the texts with which Bible-readers were most familiar, and it is estimated that not more than four new words in a hundred were introduced into the Authorized Version.

That the Rheims New Testament should have had such

an influence is somewhat surprising ; but the fact remains, that it has left its mark on every page. In the short first Epistle of John, for example, the following are all directly traceable to it : ' Confess our sins,' where previous versions had ' knowledge ' or ' acknowledge.' ' He is the propitiation,' instead of ' He it is that obtaineth ' grace.' ' The unction,' instead of ' ointment.' ' We ' may have confidence,' instead of ' we may be bold.' Such Latin words in the Authorized Version have also come from it as ' hymn ' (Matt. 26. 30) ; ' decease ' (Luke 9. 31 ; ' separated ' (Rom. 1. 1) ; ' impenitent ' (Rom. 2. 5) ; and ' contemptible ' (2 Cor. 10. 10). Other examples of the readiness of the translators to cull flowers from every garden in their profound loyalty to truth are John 9. 22 : ' He shall be put out of the ' synagogue,' instead of ' excommunicate.' 2 Cor. 5. 18 : ' Hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation,' instead of ' the office to preach the atonement.' Heb. 12. 16 : ' Profane person,' instead of ' unclean.'

It is also surprising that the version which has influenced our present version more than any other is the Genevan, when it is borne in mind that the work of translation was undertaken largely because of the King's antipathy to that version, which he denounced as the worst of all the translations. The fact, however, is beyond dispute. Dr. Westcott has shown that of the variations from the Bishops' Bible in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, ' about seven-eighths are due to the ' Genevan version, either alone or in agreement with ' one of the Latin versions.' He adds that although this is an extreme instance, ' it only represents on an exaggerated scale the general relation in which the ' Authorized Version stands to the Genevan and Bishops' ' Bible in the Prophetical Books.' The influence of the Geneva version was not so marked in the Historical Books of the Old Testament ; but in the New Testament it provided the translators with many memorable phrases. It gave us, ' it is good for us to be here,' instead of ' it is good being here for us ' ; ' men of ' like passions with you,' instead of ' mortal men like ' unto you ' ; ' we see through a glass darkly,' instead

of 'we see in a glass even in a dark speaking'; 'ambassadors for Christ,' instead of 'messengers in the room of Christ.'

'Rule II.—The names of the prophets and the holy writers, with the other names of the text, to be retained, as nigh as may be, according as they were vulgarly used.'

In this respect the example of the Geneva version was not followed, which was well. Perhaps, indeed, it was the Genevan mode of spelling proper names which led to this rule being laid down. For instead of adhering to the usual English forms, that version sought to copy the original as closely as possible. Hence Rahel for Rachel; Heuah for Eve; and such strange names as Iaakob, Izhhak, and the like. It would have been well, however, had our translators made the names uniform in the Old Testament and the New. There seems to be no good reason why Elisha should reappear in the New Testament as Eliseus, Noah as Noe, or Korah as Core. In their preface to the Revised Version of the New Testament, the Revisers say that they deemed it best to follow this rule as laid down for their predecessors as far as they could; but that while their general practice had been to follow the Greek form of names, in the case of those mentioned in the Old Testament, they followed the Hebrew. In any case they have secured uniformity between the Two Testaments, which was no more than seemly.

'Rule III.—The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, viz., the word *church* not to be translated *congregation*, &c.'

Some think that this rule was laid down for the sake of this special application. It is possible that it had its origin in a desire that the translators should see things from the High Church viewpoint; but it was sensibly interpreted and applied. As it worked out, it proved to be in reality a prohibition of any attempt

to manipulate the text in a sectarian or partisan interest or spirit ; and whatever secured that was best.

‘ Rule IV.—When a word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most of the ancient fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place and the analogy of the faith.’

Along with this may be taken Rule XV., which was probably added afterwards as a kind of by-law when the practical difficulty of the fourth rule began to be felt :

‘ Beside the said directors before mentioned, three or four of the most ancient and grave divines in either of our Universities, not employed in translation, to be assigned by the Vice-Chancellor upon conference with the rest of the Heads to be overseers of the translation, as well Hebrew as Greek, for the better observance of the fourth rule above specified.’

This rule and by-law were evidently in the interests of the English of the new version. Scholars were to ascertain the exact meaning of the text, but after that the question remained as to how this meaning could be most suitably conveyed to the English reader ; and with the result before us, we cannot but respect the means which were taken to secure it. It is to its twofold excellence as setting forth the true meaning of the original in the best English that the Authorized Version owes its well-deserved popularity. In reality, the rule was just what common-sense enjoined ; but the outcome of it in practice seems to have been that the archaic element in the Authorized Version, which was the basis of one of the pleas for the Revision in our time, was to some extent archaic even in 1611.

Hallam, the great critic, who like a ‘ hanging judge ’ so often wears the black cap, says : ‘ It may, in the eyes of many, be a better English ; but it is not the English of Daniel, or Raleigh, or Bacon, as any one may easily perceive. It abounds, in fact, especially in the Old Testament, with obsolete phraseology,

'and with single words long since abandoned, or retained 'only in provincial use.' This was due probably in part to the influence of Tyndale, himself influenced in turn, more than he knew, by Wiclif—many of whose phrases had become proverbial—and his revisers ; and in part to the determination of the translators to introduce as few novelties as possible. And it has been well asked : ' If it had been the English of the men of letters ' of James's reign, would it have retained as it has done, ' for two centuries and a half, its hold on the mind, the ' memory, the affections of the English people ? ' Besides, as Professor Davidson put it, in a plea for delicate handling of this archaic element in the Authorized Version on the part of the Revisers, of whom he was one of the most distinguished, ' It is a certain advantage for Scrip- ' ture to have an archaic cast about it ; it makes it ' venerable, and it seems to speak to us a language above ' that devoted to common things.' Neither this zeal of the translators for the purest English, nor their desire to be loyal to all that was best in the past of the national language and literature, was surprising in the England of 1611 ; for it was the England of Shakespeare and Spenser, of Hooker and Bacon, as well as of the contending Puritans and High Churchmen—and as yet there was no divorce between culture and passionate devotion to the truth of God.

' Rule V.—The divisions of the chapters to be ' altered either not at all, or as little as may be, ' if necessity so require.'

This deals with what was but a detail, although an important one ; and it would have been well if advantage had been taken of such an excellent opportunity to get rid of divisions which are frequently arbitrary and misleading, as is manifest to every careful reader. An examination of the breaks between the fifty-second and fifty-third chapters of Isaiah, or the ninth and tenth chapters of Matthew—to mention two out of many—will show how faulty the division is which still prevails. English Churchmen have pointed out how ludicrous the

effect sometimes is in reading the lesson which ends with Acts 21. 40, where the reader can hardly help making it finish, ‘‘ He spake unto them in the Hebrew ‘‘ tongue, saying,’’ here endeth the second lesson.’

‘ Rule VI.—No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words which cannot, without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.’

Historically viewed, this was perhaps the most important of all these instructions, and the furthest-reaching in its effects. It probably did more than anything else, on the negative side, to make the Authorized Version the Bible of all classes in the community. The absence of sectarian and controversial notes, such as were common in other versions, lifted the book above the strife of parties and gathered the whole nation round it in allegiance to the evangelic faith. It is true that many of the notes in the former versions had been of great service, especially when the study of the Scriptures in the vernacular was a new thing, when evangelical preaching was far from common, and useful commentaries were unknown. Yet if similar notes had been bound up with the Authorized Version, there would probably have been an unhallowed rivalry to-day in the place where every warring voice should be hushed. Even if they had not gone so far as to impose on the Church ‘ the Calvinism of ‘ the Synod of Dort, the absolutism of James, the high-flying prelacy of Bancroft,’ we would probably have had sectarian and denominational Bibles, as we have sectarian and denominational hymn-books and magazines. Men might still have been saying, ‘ I am of Tyndale, ‘ I am of Geneva, or I am of King James.’

Sometimes when we are oppressed, in our own time, by the rivalries which obscure the Gospel message, and create an atmosphere of unbelief, in which even the Omnipotent and All-Gracious Saviour can ‘ do no mighty ‘ works ‘ amongst us, we reflect, ‘ What a blessing it is ‘ that we have only one Bible ‘ ; and many a cogent

argument for unity has been based on the fact that all the churches and most of the sects accept the authority of the one Book. But suppose that even that had been otherwise—and we owe it to the absence of theological and controversial notes that it is not otherwise—the Authorized Version could never have won the supremacy to which it so soon attained if it had had notes as former versions had ; nor could it have brought the English-speaking peoples face to face with the undiluted Word ‘without note or comment,’ as it has done, but for the operation of this happy rule.

The non-controversial notes which were appended were of much value, even if they did not always shed as much light on the text as they were intended to do. They explain Hebrew words retained in the text ; add explanations as to money, measures, and weights ; and give literal translations where the original has been altered to suit English idioms. These last are still of great importance, and in the Revised Version not a few of them were transferred from the margin to the text. It was asserted, indeed, in 1659, by Dr. Gell, in an ‘Essay towards the Amendment of the last English Translation,’ ‘that the translators have placed some different significations in the margin, but those most what the better, because where truth is tried by most voices it is commonly outvoted.’ How far this was true it is not possible to say now, but it is not very credible ; and present-day scholarship would not support the burden of the charge on its merits.

‘Rule VII.—Such quotations of places to be marginally set down, as shall serve for a fit reference of one Scripture to another.’

This was the recognition of the principle that Scripture is its own best interpreter ; and everyone who makes use of the marginal references in our Bible knows how helpful they are. In the original issues of the Authorized Version these marginal references numbered somewhere about nine thousand ; but in some

modern editions as many as sixty thousand may be found. They are meant to exhibit the mind of the Spirit more clearly, and by comparison to bring out more fully the meaning of individual passages; and while occasionally the reference when it is consulted does not seem very obvious, they usually serve their purpose in a helpful fashion.

‘Rule VIII.—Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter or chapters; and having translated or amended them severally by himself, where he thinketh good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their parts what shall stand.’

This is one of the precautions which were taken to secure that along with the advantages of individual action and initiative there would also be the advantages of co-operation and common supervision. Some of the earlier versions had borne too many traces of the idiosyncrasies of the individual workers. It had been so, for example, with Wiclif’s Bible; and part of the value of Purvey’s revision consisted in the way in which the work done by Nicholas of Hereford was brought into harmony with what Wiclif himself had done. It had been so also with the Bishops’ Bible. The initials of some of the translators of that version even appear at the end of their several ‘parcels.’ Archbishop Parker thought that to do so would ‘make them more diligent and answerable for their doings.’ But however diligent it may have made them, their gifts and opportunities were not the same, any more than their standard of excellence, and their joint work bore traces of all this.

‘Rule IX.—As any one company hath dispatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered by them seriously and judiciously; for His Majesty is very careful on this point.’

This was merely an extension of the principle underlying the preceding rule; for companies might have idiosyncrasies as well as individual workmen. Why the King was specially concerned about this is not very obvious; but in so far as his urgency helped to secure the uniformity which resulted, we have cause to be grateful to him for it. Strangely enough, however, in spite of this mention of the royal anxiety, this is the one instruction which does not seem to have been consistently obeyed; probably owing to the exigencies of time. At any rate, there is no evidence that what is here enjoined was thoroughly done. All the same, whether it is due to the spirit of this instruction or to the manner in which its companion-instruction was carried out, there is a marvellous unity of impression all the way through from Genesis to Revelation. Although nearly fifty men were at work in producing this Book, it cannot be said that any of them have left the marks of their tools on what they did. It is indeed one Book, and not many.

‘Rule X.—If any company, upon the review of
 ‘the book so sent, doubt or differ upon any place,
 ‘to send them word thereof, note the place, and
 ‘withal send the reasons; to which if they consent
 ‘not, the difference to be compounded at a general
 ‘meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of
 ‘each company at the end of the work.’

‘Rule XI.—When any place of special obscurity
 ‘is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority,
 ‘to send to any learned man in the land for his
 ‘judgement of such a place.’

These rules serve further to indicate how carefully this work was planned and how well it was done. They may also inspire reflections as to how different all this was from the circumstances in which Tyndale as well as some of his noble followers had had to do their work. They also serve to account for the large measure of perfection which was undoubtedly attained in 1611. The Authorized Version won on its merits; and these were

due above all else to the tact and care, the diligence and faithfulness, and the consecrated scholarship of the translators. Nothing was overlooked that would make for accuracy, in their discovery of the meaning of their text and in their expression of that meaning. Those who drew up their instructions magnified the office of the translators; and they in turn rose to the height of their lofty calling.

‘Rule XII.—Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation in hand, and to move and charge as many as, being skilful in tongues, and having taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the company, either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford, according as it was directed before in the King’s letter to the Archbishop.’

‘Rule XIII.—The directors in each company to be the deans of Westminster and Chester for that place, and the King’s professors in Hebrew and Greek in either University.’

England had many learned men in King James’s time, and their learning had turned largely to theology and kindred studies. ‘Theology rules there,’ said Grotius regarding England, ten years after Queen Elizabeth’s death; and when Casaubon, the last of the great scholars of the sixteenth century, was invited to England by King James, he found both King and people indifferent to letters in the ordinary sense. ‘There is a great abundance of theologians in England,’ he said to a friend; ‘all point their studies in that direction.’ And this learning was fully taken advantage of for the great national enterprise of securing for the people a national Bible such as had never been secured before.

‘Rule XIV.—These translations to be used, when they agree better with the text than the Bishops’ Bible; viz., Tyndale’s, Matthew’s, Coverdale’s, Whitchurch’s, Geneva.’

By *Whitchurch's* was meant the *Great Bible*, that book with so many names, of which he was one of the printers. In this connection it may be remarked how curious it is that so many nicknames were given to these early versions and editions. Already we have come across the '*Treacle Bible*' and the '*Breeches Bible*' as used respectively to describe *Coverdale's* version and the *Genevan*. There was also an edition of the latter called the '*Whig Bible*,' from a printer's blunder which made *Matt. 5. 9* read: '*Blessed are the place makers.*' There is also the '*Vinegar Bible*,' from a misprint in the heading of the *Parable of the Vineyard*, in *Luke 20.*, which appeared as the *Parable of the Vinegar*; and many others with equally whimsical designations. There is even the '*Wicked Bible*'; that name having been given to an edition of the *Authorized Version* in 1631, in which the *Seventh Commandment* appeared with the '*not*' left out; a blunder which led to a fine of £300 being inflicted on the *King's printer* by *Archbishop Laud*.

It was only what was due to his memory and work that *Tyndale's* name was put in the forefront in this instruction; and it should never be forgotten in this connection that with the exception of *Coverdale's*, which was hardly in the direct line, the various *Bibles* here set forth as guides were for the most part no more than *Tyndale's* in various stages of revision. His translation is the real foundation of our *English Bible*; and with regard to *Coverdale*, it ought always to be borne in mind that if his version is not in the direct line, he himself is. Even apart from the *Bible* which bears his name, he had a large share in the preparation of the *Great Bible*; and probably a small share in the preparation of its rival, the *Geneva version*. '*No little of that indefinable quality,*' says *Dr. Eadie*, '*that gives popular charm to our English Bible, and has endeared it to so many generations, is owing to Coverdale.*' '*Tyndale gave the first great outline distinctly and wonderfully etched, but Coverdale added those minuter touches which soften and harmonize it.*' The man to whom we thus owe so much has been described as an

honest and well-meaning, but a very ordinary plodding sort of man, like whom there can be found ten thousand any day in London, with no remarkable ability for either good or evil. But, as Dr. Eadie remarks, 'whatever his ability, Coverdale did his own work, when none of the "ten thousand" thought of attempting it; and though his talent was certainly not transcendent, it qualified him to be the first to give a whole Bible to the English people, and to edit the Great Bible, which for so many years occupied a high place.'

No mention is made in this instruction of the Roman Catholic versions; but that was probably because the Douai Old Testament had not appeared when the work of the translators began. As it only appeared in 1609, it cannot have played any important part in the translation; but, as has already been shown, it was quite different with the Rheims New Testament. In their determination to make their work as perfect as they could, the translators took advantage of help from every available source.

CHAPTER IV
THE TRANSLATORS' PREFACE

' Wonderfully is the Bible adapted to all the varying circumstances and necessities of the believer's life. There is a fulness in it which meets every want, and yet can never be exhausted ; an interest ever fresh, ever new. We can never outgrow its help, or reach a stage of spiritual advancement when it can no longer lead us. It ever goes before, drawing out and educating every spiritual perception, satisfying every spiritual need, and yet ever giving us a sense of infinite fulness.'—DR. HUGH MACMILLAN.

CHAPTER IV

THE TRANSLATORS' PREFACE

IT is very unfortunate that the Preface to the Authorized Version—in which the translators justify the demand for a new version, show why this should shake no man's faith, give an account of previous translations, and indicate the chief principles and considerations which guided them in their work—should be as little known as the Dedication to King James is well known. For the Preface is incomparably the more important document of the two. There is much in its wise and weighty words which would be of interest at any time, but which is of special interest at this Tercentenary time; and which also gathers much of the history of the translation around it. It is to be regretted that its great length prevents its reproduction here—it extends to well-nigh twelve thousand words—for it is a great historical document, a far-reaching State Paper with which every student of Scripture should be familiar.

The preparation of it is usually attributed to Dr. Miles Smith, who became Bishop of Gloucester. Probably, however, he had the assistance of others in drawing up a statement of such importance. Certainly others would take part in its revisal. As it is too long to be quoted *in extenso*, a summary must suffice, with sufficient quotation to present the argument of the translators and their line of thought in their own words.

In the first three paragraphs they show how inevitable it was that such an undertaking as theirs should be met with criticism, and even with bitter opposition. It had always been so, in ancient Israel, in the Empire of Rome, in Jerome's time, and in their own day, and would

continue to be so till the end of time. 'Zeal to promote
'the common good, whether it be by devising any thing
'ourselves, or revising that which hath been laboured
'by others, deserveth certainly much respect and esteem,
'but yet findeth but cold entertainment in the world.
'It is welcomed with suspicion instead of love, and
'with emulation instead of thanks: and if there be
'any hole left for cavil to enter (and cavil, if it do
'not find an hole, will make one), it is sure to be
'misconstrued, and in danger to be condemned. This
'will easily be granted by as many as know story, or
'have any experience. . . . So hard a thing it is to
'please all, even when we please God best, and do
'seek to approve ourselves to every one's conscience.'

As a matter of fact, the opposition, real although it was, was not nearly so inveterate or prolonged as they seem to have anticipated; and their triumph was wonderfully complete when it came. What they had to face was nothing to what Jerome had experienced; and it is hardly possible to reason from the opposition which was shown to the Authorized Version when it first appeared to the 'passive resistance' which has been shown to the Revised Version; an attitude which seems to have become chronic if not actually permanent. In spite of fierce conflicts in Church and State, and all the horrors and preoccupations of Civil War, it may be in part because of these, the new translation made its way with unwonted rapidity; scattering the clouds of prejudice and hatred until ere long it was the Bible of the English nation and of all the English-speaking peoples in the homelands and beyond the seas, as no other had ever been before, and as no other seems likely to be again.

The translators themselves give King James much of the credit due for carrying the great enterprise through to a triumphant issue. 'He that meddleth with men's
'religion in any part meddleth with their custom, nay,
'with their freehold; and though they find no content
'in that which they have, yet they cannot abide to
'hear of altering. Notwithstanding, his royal heart was
'not daunted or discouraged for this or that colour,

'but stood resolute, as a statue immoveable, and an anvil not easy to be beaten into plates, as one saith; he knew Who had chosen him to be a soldier, or rather a captain; and being assured that the course which he intended made much for the glory of, and the building up of His Church, he would not suffer it to be broken off for whatsoever speeches or practices.'

Even if this is here stated in somewhat grandiloquent language it is essentially the truth. But for James, whatever his motives were, it seems fairly certain that nothing would have been done; or that at best there would have been some sectional revision which would have simply added another rival to those already in the field. There was no widespread enthusiasm for a new version; and evidently from the tone of this exordium of the Preface the hostility to it was both keen and persistent. Some have given Dr. Reynolds credit for adroitness in taking advantage of the prejudices and weaknesses of the King to attain his end; but there is no good ground for such a suggestion. So far as the record goes there was nothing adroit in the way in which he presented his case at Hampton Court. It was not of any man's adroitness, nor even of the King's prejudices, but of God that this great weapon for the advancement of His kingdom was forged as it was. He was overruling the strifes and weaknesses of men for His own glory and for the good of those who were out of the way.

In the fourth paragraph an earnest and finely-expressed tribute is paid to the unapproachable excellence of the Scriptures. 'It is not only an armour, but also a whole armoury of weapons, both offensive and defensive; whereby we may save ourselves, and put the enemy to flight. It is not a herb, but a tree, or rather a whole paradise of trees of life, which bring forth fruit every month, and the fruit thereof is for meat, and the leaves for medicine. It is not a pot of *Manna*, or a cruse of oil, which were for memory only, or for a meal's meat or two; but, as it were, a shower of heavenly bread sufficient for a whole host, be it never so great, and, as it were, a whole cellar full

' of oil vessels ; whereby all our necessities may be
 ' provided for, and our debts discharged. In a word,
 ' it is a panary of wholesome food against fenowed
 ' traditions ; a physician's shop (as St. Basil calls it)
 ' of preservatives against poisoned heresies ; a pandect
 ' of profitable laws against rebellious spirits ; a treasury
 ' of most costly jewels against beggarly rudiments ;
 ' finally, a fountain of most pure water springing up
 ' unto everlasting life. And what matter? the original
 ' thereof being from heaven, not from earth ; the author
 ' being God, not man ; the inditer, the Holy Spirit, not
 ' the wit of the Apostles or Prophets ; the penmen,
 ' such as were sanctified from the womb, and endued
 ' with a principal portion of God's Spirit ; the matter,
 ' verity, piety, purity, uprightness ; the form, God's word,
 ' God's testimony, God's oracles, the word of truth, the
 ' word of salvation, &c. ; the effects, light of under-
 ' standing, stableness of persuasion, repentance from dead
 ' works, newness of life, holiness, peace, joy in the Holy
 ' Ghost ; lastly, the end and reward of the study thereof,
 ' fellowship with the saints, participation of the heavenly
 ' nature, fruition of an inheritance immortal, undefiled,
 ' and that never shall fade away. Happy is the man
 ' that delighteth in the Scripture, and thrice happy that
 ' meditateth in it day and night.'

The translators were great scholars, for the most part ;
 and some of them were also keen ecclesiastics ; but
 first of all they were devout Christian men who had
 tasted and seen for themselves that God is good. That
 was their inspiration in their determination to give the
 people their best, and God's Spirit was their guide
 throughout. Naturally, therefore, they proceeded in the
 next place to show that in proportion as men recognized
 this incomparable value of Scripture, they must also
 recognize the necessity for rendering it into the
 vernacular tongues. Those who oppose such transla-
 tion on any plea whatsoever are open to the suggestion
 that the Bible has never been all to them that it can
 be to those who wait on God. Those who value the
 light will agree with the translators that the window
 should be thrown wide open that the light may stream

in. Those who have drunk of the living water themselves will feel the force of the translators' plea for a bucket being put beside the well that others may draw too. Each nation may think every other language barbarous but its own; but however barbarous any tongue may be, it is through it alone that those who speak it can hear the Oracles of God with understanding hearts. 'Translation it is that openeth the window, 'to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we 'may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtain, 'that we may look into the most holy place; that 'removeth the cover of the well, that we may come 'by the water; even as Jacob rolled away the stone 'from the mouth of the well, by which means the flocks 'of Laban were watered. Indeed, without translation 'into the vulgar tongue, the unlearned are but like 'children at Jacob's well (which was deep) without a 'bucket or something to draw with; or as that person 'mentioned by Esay, to whom when a sealed book was 'delivered with this motion, *Read this, I pray thee,* 'he was fain to make this answer, *I cannot, for it is 'sealed.'*

In the three paragraphs which follow this plea there is an interesting account of the Septuagint and other Greek versions, of the Vulgate and other Latin versions, and of the various translations into the languages of the Dalmatians, Syrians, Egyptians, Persians, and other peoples, including the Saxons. Beda, as they tell us, is reported by Cistertiensis to have turned a great part of the Scriptures into Saxon; and on the same authority, King Alured is said to have turned the Psalter into Saxon. There are other two noteworthy references in this section. 'Much about that time, even in our King 'Richard the Second's time, John Trevisa translated them 'into English, and many English Bibles in written hand 'are yet to be seen that divers translated, as it is very 'probable, in that age.'

As already indicated, this statement rests on a very slender foundation as regards John of Trevisa; and on no foundation at all otherwise. The era of literary criticism had not yet come, and statements such as

this were handed down without any adequate sifting or verification. The manuscript Bibles which were to be seen then are still to be seen, just as they were seen by Sir Thomas More in his day, and are nothing more than copies of the Purvey revision of Wiclif's translation, and executed in that generation. The other reference is to 'the Lord Cromwell' as a friend of translation work ; and it does no more than justice to one to whom that sacred cause owed much in the dark days when it had no royal patron, and had to be done in secret and at a great cost.

The ninth paragraph deals briefly with the attitude of the Church of Rome to this work of rendering the Scriptures into the vernacular ; and although the conflict was very fierce in those days, and involved the very existence of the nation as great and free, this controversial matter is dealt with temperately and without bitterness. The position is stated, however, with perfect candour and with considerable pungency. 'So much 'are they afraid of the light of the Scripture (*lucifugae* ' *Scripturarum*, as Tertullian speaketh) that they will 'not trust the people with it, no, not as it is set forth 'by their own sworn men, no, not with the licence of 'their own Bishops and Inquisitors. Yea, so unwilling 'are they to communicate the Scriptures to the people's 'understanding in any sort, that they are not ashamed 'to confess, that we forced them to translate it into 'English against their wills. This seemeth to argue 'a bad cause, or a bad conscience, or both.'

The translators deal next with the various specific objections which had been taken to their work, and these seem to have been very varied as well as numerous. There were those who held that there was no need for a new English version, and who suggested that any such translation would cast a slight on the earlier English Bibles to which they owed so much. These were answered first in the words of Jerome, who had gone through the same kind of controversy : 'Do we con- 'demn the ancient? In no case ; but after the 'endeavours of them that were before us, we take the 'best pains we can in the house of God.' The translators

also offered an answer in their own words: 'And to the same effect say we, that we are so far from condemning any of their labours that travelled before us in this kind, either in this land, or beyond sea, either in King Henery's time, or King Edward's (if there were any translation, or correction of a translation, in his time), or Queen Elizabeth's of ever renowned memory, that we acknowledge them to have been raised up of God for the building and furnishing of His Church, and that they deserve to be had of us and of posterity in everlasting remembrance. . . . Therefore, blessed be they, and most honoured be their name, that break the ice, and give the onzet upon that which helpeth forward to the saving of souls.'

But there were other adversaries who made play of the admission that former versions were useless or worse, and discredited the position of those who demanded the Scriptures in the vernacular. To all such we reply, says the Preface, 'that we do not deny, nay, we affirm and avow, that the very meanest translation of the Bible in English, set forth by men of our profession (for we have seen none of their's of the whole Bible as yet), containeth the word of God, nay, is the word of God. . . . A man may be counted a virtuous man, though he have made many slips in his life, also a comely man and lovely, although he have some warts upon his hand. . . . No cause therefore why the word translated should be denied to be the word, or forbidden to be current, notwithstanding that some imperfections and blemishes may be noted in the setting forth of it.' God's Word is still God's Word, no matter what may be the language in which it appears; and as for perfection, what was very perfect under the sun, apart from the work of those who, like the Apostles, were endued with the privilege of infallibility? The Septuagint itself was far from being perfect, yet the Apostles used it. They were ready to avail themselves of the best they had, and to hear the truth from any and every source.

The Preface then deals very effectively with a third objection which was being taken to their enterprise,

based on the number of revisions which had already been made. 'For to whom was it ever imputed for 'a fault (by such as were wise),' it asks, 'to go over 'that which he had done and to amend it where he 'saw cause?' They also show that Councils and Popes had approved of the principle of revision again and again. The wise man never makes a fetish of a wooden or cast-iron consistency which would prevent him from being wiser to-day than he was yesterday, or rob him of any hope of being wiser to-morrow than he is to-day. He is always ready to revise what he has done, and improve it if he can. That was a working principle with all the reformers and translators in the various lands, when the new light was breaking out in every direction.

Having thus cleared the ground, the Preface proceeds to describe what was the purpose of the translators throughout, and this is done in a very modest and effective fashion. Their orders had been to alter as little as they could consistently with loyalty to the original, and they had given heed to this. It should never be overlooked that the Authorized Version was a revision rather than a new translation. Indeed, one of the objections urged against it when it appeared was that it was too little of a new version. It was 'newly translated out 'of the original tongues'; but this statement on the title-page must be qualified by what follows: 'With 'the former translations diligently compared and revised.' 'Truly, good Christian Reader, we never thought from 'the beginning that we should need to make a new 'translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one; '(for then the imputation of Sixtus had been true in 'some sort, that our people had been fed with gall of 'dragons instead of wine, with wheal instead of milk;) 'but to make a good one better, or out of many good 'ones one principal good one, not justly to be excepted 'against; that hath been our endeavour, that our mark.' Yet it was a genuine translation, verified at every step by reference to the sources. 'If you ask what they 'had before them; truly it was the Hebrew text of 'the Old Testament, the Greek of the New. These are

' the two golden pipes, or rather conduits, wherethrough
' the olive branches empty themselves into the gold.'

They tell, too, of the kind of men who were set to do this work ; men who sought the truth rather than their own praise ; and of how thoroughly the work was done. They did not huddle it through in seventy-two days, but spent twice seven times seventy-two.

' Neither did we think much to consult the translators
' or commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek, or
' Latin ; no, nor the Spanish, French, Italian, or Dutch ;
' neither did we disdain to revise that which we had
' done, and to bring back to the anvil that which we
' had hammered ; but having and using as great helps
' as were needful, and fearing no reproach for slowness,
' nor coveting praise for expedition we have at length,
' through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought
' the work to that pass that you see.' Nothing that was really essential could escape a company so constituted and so minded, and as the years have shown and everybody testifies, their work was nobly done. Many more exact renderings were introduced, and many graphic expressions which have become household words. Taken collectively, the points of agreement with the earlier versions are more noticeable than the points of divergence. They welcomed happy renderings from every quarter until their work became a sort of mosaic of the best results of all the previous versions ; and the circumstances in which their work was done enabled the translators to look round in quietness and see everything that had been already achieved as none of their predecessors could. And yet with all their borrowing there is a general smoothness and consistency which prevent their work from being thought of as a sort of patch-work. It is a growth rather than a manufactured article, and few marks of the tools or traces of the hammer are to be seen. In the best sense, it is both a revision and a translation.

Thereafter they proceed to explain and vindicate their action in including among their marginal notes those which dealt with alternative renderings and various readings. They remark that in matters which concern salva-

tion the Scripture is plain, and they were not among those who tremble for the ark. They saw distinct advantages in letting the truth be known.

'Therefore, as St. *Augustine* saith, that variety of translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures ; so diversity of signification and sense in the margin, where the text is not so clear, must needs do good ; yea, is necessary, as we are persuaded. We know that *Sixtus Quintus* expressly forbiddeth that any variety of readings of their vulgar edition shall be put in the margin ; (which though it be not altogether the same thing to that we have in hand, yet it looketh that way ;) but we think he hath not all of his own side his favourers for this conceit. They that are wise had rather have their judgments at liberty in differences of readings, than to be captivated to one, when it may be the other.'

The translators then proceed to deal with the vexed question of whether a word in the original should always be rendered by the same word in the English ; and state their position with unbated breath, and in a fashion which deserves to be pondered before their practice is roundly condemned, as it has so often been.

'Another thing we think good to admonish thee of, gentle Reader, that we have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words, as some peradventure would wish that we had done, because they observe, that some learned men somewhere have been as exact as they could that way. Truly, that we might not vary from the sense of that which we had translated before, if the word signified the same thing in both places, (for there be some words that be not of the same sense everywhere,) we were especially careful, and made a conscience according to our duty. But that we should express the same notion in the same particular word ; as for example, if we translate the *Hebrew* or *Greek* word once by *purpose*, never to call it *intent* ; if one where *journeying*, never *travelling* ; if one where *think*, never *suppose* ; if one where *pain*, never *ache* ; if one where *joy*, never *gladness*, &c., thus to mince the matter, we thought to savour more

'of curiosity than wisdom, and that rather it would breed
'scorn in the atheist, than bring profit to the godly
'reader. For is the kingdom of God become words or
'syllables? Why should we be in bondage to them,
'if we may be free? use one precisely, when we may
'use another no less fit as commodiously?'

This has been held by many to be the outstanding defect of the Authorized Version, and the Revised Version at once joins issue here. Yet there are two sides even to this question, and it might have been well had the Revisers given heed to the weighty words addressed to them by Dr. A. B. Davidson, himself a member of the Old Testament company, and a consummate student and scholar. He pointed out that the practice of the Authorized Version 'has greatly contributed to make the English Bible what it is, and to give it much of the hold on men's imaginations which it has. Its pathos and music and charming variety are largely due to this; its beauty, in a word, is greatly owing to it. And religion very willingly allies itself with what is beautiful and uses it for its own furtherance. And any change here will, without doubt, be a loss to religion. And how great a loss it will also be to the cause of literature, and the interests of the English tongue! The English Bible has been to us what the Q'oran has been to the dweller in the desert, the source both of our intellectual and religious life, and the instrument for expressing our highest thought.' After pointing out that he thought the men of 1611 had carried their introduction of variety, too far, as when they give four renderings—count, account, reckon, and impute—for a Greek word, which if not technical is used in a special sense, Dr. Davidson adds: 'There is certainly now rising, and indeed running very strongly, a current of opposition to this method of rendering—a current, I fear, which will be found to work as much havoc as the opposite one. The maxim of this new method is to render the same Greek or Hebrew word always by the same English one. Under this new principle, all variety will disappear.' He then refers to 'the well-known fact that

'the genius of one language differs from that of another ; that sameness and exactness characterize the Greek, variety and looseness the English ; that the Hebrew language is poor in its vocabulary, while the English is copious ; that even where a word corresponds in general to another, the addition of an epithet may destroy the correspondence, and render the use of another term necessary ; that not only meaning, but rhythm, flow, and sound make up language.'

The translators further tell that in regard to the old ecclesiastical words they had shunned the 'scrupulosity of the Puritans' and the 'obscurity of the Papists,' and kept the important fact before them that the Scriptures should speak so as to be understood by plain and unlearned folk, the wayfaring man or the man in the street.

'Lastly, we have on the one side avoided the scrupulosity of the Puritanes, who leave the old Ecclesiastical words, and betake them to other, as when they put *washing* for *baptism*, and *congregation* instead of *Church*: as also on the other side we have shunned the obscurity of the Papists, in their *azymes*, *tunike*, *rational*, *holocausts*, *prepuce*, *pasche*, and a number of such like, whereof their late translation is full, and that of purpose to darken the sense, that since they must needs translate the Bible, yet by the language thereof it may be kept from being understood. But we desire that the Scripture may speak like itself, as in the language of *Canaan*, that it may be understood even of the very vulgar.'

But while the middle course may usually be the safest and is often the best, it can hardly be adopted as a wise working principle in connection with translation or etymology. If 'washing' means 'washing,' there does not seem to be any good reason for rendering it as 'baptism,' especially in a version which so manifestly seeks to trust the people ; and it is not easy to see why, if a word means 'congregation,' and not 'church,' it should not be so rendered. But their instructions on this point were very definite, and probably they worked out for peace in the end and did no great harm.

Then, finally, the Preface deals with the grand result of their work, that great inheritance which they did so much to hand on even to our day, enriched as it had never been before. It is a Divine inheritance, for it was God who opened up the fountains of living waters ; but it is also an inheritance from men, for many others have laboured in this holy cause. 'Ye are brought 'unto fountains of living water which ye digged not ; 'do not cast earth into them, with the Philistines, neither 'prefer broken pits before them, with the wicked Jews. 'Others have laboured, and you may enter into their 'labours. O receive not so great things in vain : O 'despise not so great salvation.' The great desire of these men of God to whom we owe so much was that the Scriptures should be loved and read, and the appeal with which they closed their message to their own generation is still resounding down through the ages : the prayer of all who wish well to our land must be that it will be heard anew in these days, when their great service to humanity and the cause of God is being freshly brought before the English-speaking peoples in many lands.

'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the 'living God ; but a blessed thing it is, and will bring 'us to everlasting blessedness in the end, when God 'speaketh unto us, to hearken ; when He setteth His 'Word before us, to read it ; when He stretcheth out 'His hand and calleth, to answer, Here am I, here we 'are to do Thy will, O God. The Lord work a care and 'conscience in us to know Him and serve Him, that 'we may be acknowledged of Him at the appearing of 'our Lord JESUS CHRIST, to Whom with the Holy 'Ghost be all praise and thanksgiving. Amen.'

CHAPTER V
THE GRAND RESULT

‘There is gold in the rocks which fringe the Pass of the Splugen, gold even in the stones which mend the roads, but there is too little of it to be worth extracting. Not so the Scriptures: they are much fine gold; their very dust is precious.’—C. H. SPURGEON.

CHAPTER V

THE GRAND RESULT

LIKE the Daughter of the King, the consecrated work of the translators was clothed in raiment of needlework and in cloth of wrought gold, and was likewise all glorious within. Turning first to the more external and technical aspects of it, it would seem that two distinct editions of the new version were issued in 1611 so much alike that many pages of the one might be exchanged for pages of the other, and yet obviously set up and printed independently of each other. Some of the experts call the one the first edition and some the other ; and it is so difficult to tell which was absolutely first, that they might both be called first editions. They have been somewhat whimsically named the 'He and She Bibles,' from the fact that while in Ruth 3. 15 the one has 'He went into the city,' the other has 'She went into the city.' Even a cursory examination of copies of the two editions shows that they differ in hundreds of minute particulars, and that each has errors of its own. Many of these have been corrected on their own authority by printers and editors since, who often in turn introduced new errors of their own. For it must be borne in mind throughout that the Authorized Version as we have it now differs in many details from the editions of 1611.

Nor can it be said that all the corrections or errors which have been introduced by these unauthorized revisers, usually without remark, have been in connection with trivial matters of punctuation and the like. One of the first editions actually read, 'Then cometh 'Judas,' for 'Then cometh Jesus,' in Matt. 26. 36.

The errors, indeed, sometimes completely changed the meaning of the passages involved ; as where the word 'not' was added in Leviticus 17. 14, and omitted in Ezekiel 24. 8. In addition to the 'He and She Bibles,' another edition was also issued in 1611, and some authorities prefer to put it that there were practically three first editions. Each of these has 1611 on the New Testament title-page, and they are all fine, handsome volumes in bold black letter. Other editions followed each other in rapid succession, very rapid indeed when the limited extent of the reading public as it was then is borne in mind. There were other folio editions in 1613, 1616, 1617, 1629, 1634, 1638, 1640, and 1642. The first octavo and quarto editions were published in 1612, and others followed in 1613, 1619, 1631, and 1633. Since then there has been a constant stream of editions of all sorts, and the flow is greater now than ever before.

The copyright of the Authorized Version is vested in the Crown, by whom the right of printing is granted by charter or licence. The original grants, however, contained no injunction as to correctness, and have provided no penalties for inaccuracy. The system, indeed, for long seems to have led to carelessness and gross inaccuracies ; and nothing is more remarkable than the extraordinary blunders which often disfigured the pages of many of the earlier editions, and were often persisted in in one reprint after another. One edition is said to have contained two thousand errors, and another six thousand. 'Corruption' appeared for 'conception' ; 'condemnation' for 'redemption' ; 'flesh' for 'fish' ; 'wilderness' for 'mules' ; 'wake' for 'walk' ; 'delighted' for 'defiled' ; 'continue' for 'confirm' ; and so on. Whole clauses were sometimes omitted, while negatives were wrongfully put in and left out.

Lord Mansfield is reported in Blackstone's Commentaries to have declared that 'the English translation 'the King bought ; therefore it has been concluded to 'be his property. His whole right rests on the foundation of property in the copy, by the common law.'

If this be the law, it was a famous bargain which James made for the Crown ; for so far as is known he never expended a farthing on the production of the Authorized Version. It is true that Robert Barker had a salary as royal printer, but that had no special reference to the printing of the Bible. Not only so, but a patent was granted to John Speed, in the eighth year of King James, by which he was entitled to bind up his genealogical charts, accompanied with a Map of Canaan and its Index, without any option of the purchaser, in all Bibles. This privilege was to hold good 'only for the term of ten years next ensuing,' at an additional charge of not more than two shillings for the large folio size. In the first folio edition in Roman letter, that of 1616, this inset extended to thirty-four pages.

The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge enjoy the right to print Bibles, under charters dating back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As distinct from these *charters*, which are perpetual, the last *patent*, or licence, for England, was granted by George IV. to Andrew Strachan, George Eyre, and Andrew Spottiswoode, for a term of thirty years. This expired on January 21, 1860, and was then renewed during pleasure, Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode being thus the King's printers so far as the publication of the Authorized Version is concerned. In Scotland the last patent expired in 1839, and was not renewed. Since then there has been a Bible Board, with authority to grant licences to those who desire to print editions of the Bible. The Lord Advocate for the time being is chairman of this Board, and printers must enter into a bond for £500, and submit their sheets for approval before they can be issued. When the monopoly was abolished in Scotland, the price of Bibles fell about one half, and there was a large increase in the circulation. In Ireland there is still a patentee, but Trinity College, Dublin, has also a concurrent right.

Where the text of Scripture is accompanied by a *bona fide* commentary, there is free trade in Bible printing. At one time, Bibles were regularly smuggled into England from Scotland, and petitions regarding this

invasion of their rights from the monopolists to the Privy Council are still extant. In the case of the Revised Version, the right of publication belongs exclusively to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The fact that no Bibles could be printed in Scotland until seventy years ago, except by the King's patentee, and that there was thus only one privileged press in that country, whereas there were three in England, acted very injuriously. Importation was forbidden, and the Bibles which were printed were full of errors, often of a most ridiculous kind. Both paper and printing were sometimes so bad that the books were nearly illegible. As recently as 1824, an interdict was obtained by the holders of the patent—fortunately the last to hold it—from the Court of Session, prohibiting any copies of the Scriptures printed in England from being imported into Scotland. This decision was affirmed by the House of Lords on appeal in 1829; with the result that the British and Foreign Bible Society, which could send Bibles to the ends of the earth, dared not send them to Scotland, even to its own auxiliary Societies.

The full title of the book which was to do such a work in the coming ages and to attain such a place in history was 'THE HOLY BIBLE, conteyning the Old Testament and the New: Newly Translated out of the Originall Tongues: and with the former Translations diligently compared and reuised, by his Maiesties speciall Commandement. Appointed to be read in Churches. Imprinted at London by Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Maiestie. Anno Dom. 1611.' In some copies these words appear in a very handsome copper-plate engraving, representing Moses on one side and Aaron on the other; the four Evangelists at the corners; and the Sacred Name above. In other copies the same words are printed within a woodcut which had frequently appeared in copies of the Geneva Bible. After the title-page came the Dedication and Preface. Then there was a Kalendar; Almanack for xxxix years, &c.; Table of Proper Lessons, &c.; and the names and order of all the books. In many copies John Speed's inset was also to be found.

Among other matters of interest in connection with the first issues of the Authorized Version are the marginal notes, the references, the chapter-headings, and the use of italics. Although everything controversial had been disallowed, the marginal notes were both numerous and important. Excluding the Apocrypha, there were over seven thousand such notes appended by the translators; and it would have been well had those which have since been added without any authority, amounting to 368 in number according to Dr. Scrivener, been distinguished from the others by being put into brackets. Some editions of the Authorized Version have been issued in our time with the notes printed separately, at the foot of the page, a measure which prevents them from being overlooked amid the references with which they are usually mixed up.

These marginal notes of the translators fall into four classes. First of all there are those which deal with different readings in the manuscripts, where these were deemed worthy of mention. Then there are those which give literal translations where the English idiom seemed to necessitate some deviation from the text. Fully two-thirds of the notes are of this sort, giving more literal meanings of the Hebrew or Chaldaic in the Old Testament and of the Greek in the New. As has already been noticed, the value of many of these notes is borne out by the fact that not a few of them were transferred from the margin to the text when the Revisers came to deal with them. The third class of notes deals with the explanation of Hebrew words which were retained in the text, such as 'Mammon' and 'Hallelujah.' The fourth class consists of notes with useful information regarding distances, weights, and measures.

More than half of the marginal references in the Authorized Version, as it left the hands of the translators, were taken from manuscript and printed copies of the Vulgate, and thus represent the fruit of the researches of mediæval scholars. As we have seen, they did not amount to more than nine thousand in number, and did much to elucidate the text and guide readers into the meaning of what they read. In later

editions this number has often been enormously increased, sometimes seven-fold ; but the value of the references thus added was not always in proportion to their bulk. The chapter-headings, like the column-headings, were meant to give a summary of each chapter, and usually they do so. Sometimes, however, they go further ; as in the Song of Solomon, where they become a sort of commentary, and explain the book as an allegory of Christ and the Church. Jews have remarked, too, that in the chapter-headings of the Old Testament, when the prophets speak of sin, they are always made to speak of the sins of the Jews ; but when they speak of glory and holiness, it is the glory and holiness of the Church. There had been similar headings in the Great Bible, the Geneva Bible, and the Bishops' Bible ; but the translators of the Authorized Version introduced an entirely new set. For the heading to Jeremiah 10. in the Bishops' Bible, 'of evil Curates,' we now have, for example, 'He lamented the spoil of the tabernacle by 'foolish pastors' ; while the column-heading at Mark 6., in the Geneva version 'Inconvenience of 'dancing,' now appears as 'John the Baptist beheaded.' With only twelve exceptions the headings introduced in 1611 have kept their place in most of the Bibles still in use. The only notable change among the twelve is that connected with the 149th Psalm. Here the original heading was, 'That power which He hath given 'to the Church to rule the consciences of men' ; where the last six words have been struck out. In some editions these headings are omitted altogether.

In its employment of italics to indicate words not directly represented in the original, the Authorized Version followed the example of previous versions, and in particular that of the Geneva version. Some heartily approve of the practice as making it clear throughout that the book is a translation. Others urge that they are often used without either necessity or warrant, as the words supplied are in reality implied in the text. In the Beatitudes, for example, there is no reason whatever for putting the word 'are' in italics throughout, since the verb is implied in the Greek idiom although

it is not actually expressed in the Greek text. There is even the danger in modern times that the italics may be taken by some readers to indicate the need for greater emphasis, and, on the whole, their disappearance would be no great loss. As a matter of fact, the practice of the translators was by no means uniform, and their work in this respect is not so careful as in some other respects. There are, indeed, indications of haste ; and that there was some hurry in the end seems to be borne out further by the fact that there are no paragraph marks after the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

Turning now from the outer and external aspects of the grand result to the inner, we find that the outcome of the labours of the translators was a volume which ever since it first appeared has gone forth conquering and to conquer, and which under God and through the testimony of His Holy Spirit, has been not merely the source of Britain's greatness, but a source of blessing and consolation, of inspiration and revival. It has been a well of water for the thirsty ; a river of life which has turned many a wilderness into a fruitful field ; a key which has unlocked many a dungeon door and set the captives of ignorance and error, of superstition and sin, free for ever. It has opened blind eyes, and brought out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sat in darkness out of the prison-house. The testimonies which have been borne to its merits and the work it has done come from every quarter, and it is but right that, at this time of Tercentenary celebration, some of the more notable of these should be brought together.

The late Professor Huxley, agnostic though he was, speaking of our English Bible as a schoolbook, said : ' Consider the great historical fact that for three ' centuries this book has been woven into the life of ' that which is best and noblest in English history ; ' that it has become the national epic of Britain, and ' is as familiar to noble and simple, from John O'Groat's ' to Land's End, as Dante and Tasso once were to the ' Italians : that it is written in the noblest and purest ' English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of mere

' literary form : and, finally, that it forbids the veriest
 ' hind who never left his village to be ignorant of the
 ' existence of other countries and other civilizations, and
 ' of a great past stretching back to the furthest limits
 ' of the oldest nations in the world. By the study of
 ' what other book could children be so much humanized
 ' and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical
 ' procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary
 ' space in the interval between two eternities ; and earns
 ' the blessings or the curses of all time, according to its
 ' efforts to do good and hate evil, even as they also
 ' are earning their payment for their work?'

John Ruskin, in his *Præterita*, says : ' My mother
 ' forced me, by steady daily toil, to learn long chapters
 ' of the Bible by heart ; . . . and to that discipline—
 ' patient, accurate, and resolute—I owe, not only
 ' a knowledge of the book, which I find occasionally
 ' serviceable, but much of my general power of taking
 ' pains, and the best part of my taste in Literature.'
 ' I have just opened my oldest (in use) Bible. . . . My
 ' mother's list of chapters, with which, thus learned,
 ' she established my soul in life, has just fallen out of
 ' it. . . . And truly . . . this maternal installation of
 ' my mind in that property of chapters, I count, very
 ' confidently, the most precious, and on the whole the
 ' one essential part of all my education.'

Thomas Carlyle's testimony is also memorable :
 ' In the poorest cottage are books—is one Book,
 ' wherein for several thousands of years the spirit of
 ' man has found light and nourishment, and an inter-
 ' preting response to whatever is Deepest in him ;
 ' wherein still to this day, for the eye that will look
 ' well, the Mystery of Existence reflects itself, if not
 ' resolved, yet revealed, and prophetically emblemed ;
 ' if not to the satisfying of the outward sense, yet to
 ' the opening of the inward sense, which is the far
 ' grander result.'

The late Dean Alford, so distinguished as a Bible
 student, said : ' We in this land possess a version of
 ' Holy Scripture which may challenge comparison for
 ' faithfulness, for simplicity, and for majesty with any

'that the world has ever seen. . . . And when we intensify all these claims to our affection by the fact that it has been for centuries, and is now, the vehicle to this great English race of all that is pure, and holy, and lovely, and of good report . . . the first lesson of infancy, the guide of mature life, the comforter of sickness and death, . . . we can hardly be surprised that many and some of the best among us refuse to see its faults, and are unable to contemplate with any content the prospect of their being corrected.'

'Our version,' said Bishop Westcott, another great Christian scholar, who could speak with authority, 'is the work of a Church and not of a man. Or rather, it is a growth and not a work. Countless external influences, independent of the actual translators, contributed to mould it; and when it was fashioned, the Christian instinct of the nation, touched, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, decided on its authority.'

Nor must the touching tribute of Faber, who had exchanged its beauties for the crudities of the Romish version, be left out, often as it has been quoted before. 'Who will say,' he asked, 'that the uncommon beauty and marvellous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy in this country? It lives on the ear like a music that can never be forgotten; like the sound of church bells, which the convert scarcely knows how he can forgo. Its felicities seem often to be almost things rather than words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of the national seriousness. Nay, it is worshipped with a positive idolatry, in extenuation of whose fanaticism its intrinsic beauty pleads availingly with the scholar. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. It is the representative of a man's best moments; all that there has been about him of soft, and gentle, and pure, and penitent, and good, speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible. It is his sacred thing, which doubt never dimmed and controversy never soiled; and in the length of the land there is not a

'Protestant with one spark of religiousness about him
'whose spiritual biography is not in his Saxon Bible.'

With this may be conjoined the testimony of a Roman Catholic scholar, Geddes, in his Prospectus for a new Translation. Speaking of the Authorized Version, he says: 'In point of perspicacity and noble simplicity, 'propriety of idiom, and purity of style, no English 'version has as yet surpassed it.'

'The Authorized Version,' said Dr. Eadie, himself one of the Revisers, 'has in it the traces of its origin, 'and its genealogy may be reckoned. For while it 'has the fulness of the Bishops' Bible without its frequent 'literalisms or its repeated supplements, it has the 'graceful vigour of the Genevan, the quiet grandeur 'of the Great Bible, the clearness of Tyndale, the 'harmonies of Coverdale, and the stately theological 'vocabulary of the Rheims. It has thus a complex 'unity in its structure . . . all the earlier versions 'ranging over eighty years having bequeathed to it con- 'tributions the individuality of which has not been in 'all cases toned down.'

Truly it is a grand result, the fruit of many labours and much devotion and consecrated learning, the harvest of prayerful sowing amid persecution and hardship and toil, and of readiness to reap wisely and lovingly from every field. Its language is thoroughly English; and yet it is separated by its archaic form from the colloquial English of every day on the one hand, and from the literary English of most other books on the other. It has become the language of religion; a book for the people, and not for an inner circle of experts; for ordinary men and women, and not for scholars and theologians alone. Of pure English words there are 97 per cent. in the Authorized Version, as against 92 per cent. in *The Cry of the Children*; 89 per cent. in *In Memoriam*; 88 per cent. in Chaucer's *Prologue*; 86 per cent. in *The Faerie Queen*; 85 per cent. in Shakespeare, and 81 per cent. in *Paradise Lost*. Nor is its archaic language that of Elizabethan or Jacobean times, as has been said. Its genealogy is to be traced up in the direct line

through every stage of translation and revision to the Latin Vulgate ; and the common English ancestor of every such revision is the Wiclif Bible of the fourteenth century.

As Dr. Moulton has shown, the earlier Wiclif renderings passed into general currency and became almost proverbial phrases. Hence it is also that while an examination of the two versions shows at once a very considerable identity of language and expression between Tyndale and Purvey's Wiclif, Tyndale could nevertheless say, 'that he had no man to counterfeit, neither 'was holpen with English of any that had interpreted 'the same or such like things in the Scripture before-'hand.' In many cases the Vulgate supplies the connecting link ; and gradually the English vocabulary in which the Authorized Version is written grew up to be used in that version in such a fashion that nothing better for the purpose can ever be hoped for. The translators kept sufficiently aloof from the peculiarities of their age for their work to live on untouched by changing literary fashions, and to sustain a long protest against ephemeral crudities.

It was a great day for England and the cause of Christ and freedom in every land when at length the Authorized Version appeared ; and although no one could possibly have any conception of the career which lay before it, there was some sense of the momentousness of the event. 'And now after long expectation and 'great desire,' said Fuller, 'came forth the new 'translation of the Bible (most beautifully printed), by 'a select and competent number of divines appointed 'for that purpose ; . . . who, neither coveting praise 'for expedition nor fearing reproach for slackness, . . . 'had expended almost three years in the work. . . . 'So that their industry, skilfulness, piety, and discretion, 'have therein bound the Church unto them in a debt 'of special remembrance and thankfulness. These, with 'Jacob, "rolled away the stone from the mouth of the "'well" of life ; so that even Rachels, weak women, 'may freely come, both to drink themselves, and water 'the flocks of their families at the same.'

No one, of course, has ever imagined that even this great masterpiece of translation is without fault. It was only the work of men, although it dealt with the work of God ; and all we can claim for them is that they did their best. They had to work with defective texts ; they lived in the seventeenth century and not in the twentieth ; and they had to do their work in the pre-critical era, and not in an era in which criticism has been so much overdone. Exception has been taken by scholars to the Authorized Version rendering of the Greek and Hebrew tenses. It is declared that 'it has preserved no pervading distinction between the Aorist and the Perfect in Greek ; and its renderings of the Hebrew Imperfect are full of blunders.' The failure of the translators to bring out the full force of the Aorist, as referring to a definite occurrence in the past, sometimes tends to obscure the teaching of Scripture and to foster erroneous views of its meaning. It may be, however, that our use of the English tenses has changed considerably since 1611. Then as regards the use of the Article, on which so much often depends, the translators do not appear to have acted on any fixed principle as to when to express it and when to leave it out. Professor Davidson, sympathetic critic as he was, goes so far as to say that they were manifestly ignorant of its force. These, however, are but the spots on the sun ; and we should never cease to give thanks for all the wonders of the grand result, and for all it has achieved and is still achieving, in the service of God and man.

CHAPTER VI

IN WHAT SENSE WAS THE AUTHORIZED VERSION
AUTHORIZED?

'Of all books in the world, the Bible is one which will not yield up its riches and its sweetness except to the diligent and faithful and earnest student. All great works demand long and patient and persevering study. The lesser mind cannot expect to grasp at once the purpose of the greater. Sir J. Reynolds tells us of the profound disappointment with which he first beheld Raphael's great picture of the Transfiguration at the Vatican. It was only as he came again and again, only as he lingered over it and dwelt upon it till the picture took possession of him, that he at last perceived its grandeur and its harmony.'—PEROWNE.

CHAPTER VI

IN WHAT SENSE WAS THE AUTHORIZED VERSION AUTHORIZED?

MATTHEW'S Bible of 1537 was licensed by the King, and the Great Bible was specially sanctioned by proclamation. The Bishops' Bible was duly approved by Convocation; and, as the legal successor of the Great Bible, inherited its royal authority. The version of 1611, however, although it was begun and carried through with the hearty benediction of King James, seems never to have obtained any other authorization than that of public appreciation; that of the favour of scholars and people alike. The King's connection with the inauguration of the movement in 1604; the Dedication which it has always borne on the forefront; the statement on the title-page that it is appointed to be read in churches; even the fact that it could be printed only by permission of the Crown—all helped to confirm the belief of many that in some literal and distinctive fashion it was made the Authorized Version. But difficult as it is to prove a negative, and we know singularly little about various important aspects of this translation, it is practically certain that no such authorization was ever given.

The plan sketched by the King at first was that the new version should be undertaken by the 'best learned' in both Universities; after them to be reviewed by 'the bishops and the chief learned of the Church; from them to be presented to the Privy Council; and lastly 'to be ratified by his royal authority; and so this whole

'Church to be bound unto it and none other.' But, as Bishop Westcott has epigrammatically put it, 'no evidence has yet been produced to show that the version 'was ever publicly sanctioned by Convocation, or by Parliament, or by the Privy Council, or by the King.' Dr. Eadie, however, argues that 'the new edition had 'virtual authority by the order of succession, by the 'law of entail and lineage; for it was made as a 'national book, by royal order, on purpose to displace 'the Bishops' Bible, and it had succeeded the Great 'Bible which had been formally authorized by the 'Crown.'

Mr. Dore, in his *Old Bibles*, argues in the same way; that 'the Bible of 1611, being a revision of the 1602 'edition of Parker's Bible, may justly be deemed to 'possess all the rights and privileges belonging to the 'version of which it was a revision.' But while no one disputes the contention that the new edition had 'virtual authority,' and might be looked on as inheriting the rights and privileges of its nominal predecessor, the fact remains that it made its way and attained its supremacy without public sanction or authorization of any kind, so far as the records go. Its actual authority has not been derived from any ecclesiastical or legislative action, but is due to its intrinsic merits; and in all the circumstances it is well that it should have been so. The only authorization of which there is any record, or which has ever been required, has been that which is the highest and best of all—the Divine right to rule, which can never be permanently called in question; speaking with authority, and not as the scribes; the survival of the fittest; the acknowledgment on all hands of its manifest superiority. *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*. 'The Christian instinct of the nation, touched, 'as we believe, by the Spirit of God, decided on its 'authority.'

The words 'appointed to be read in churches,' which appear on the title-pages of all modern editions, are not always found in the earlier issues, especially in the smaller editions not intended for use in church. They are not even found on the title-page of the New

Testament of the 'He' edition of 1611, which most experts consider to have been the first issue of all. They probably refer to the lessons to be read in churches, and in the preliminary pages there is a table showing first 'how the Psalter is appointed to be read,' and then 'the order how the rest of Scripture is appointed to 'be read.' To provide for the proper selection of the lessons a Kalendar was given in all the early folio editions. As for the suggestion that these words of themselves bear, that the use of the new version was enjoined by royal authority as soon as it appeared, it must be remembered that, as a matter of fact, it was not so used even in the churches where men were most amenable to the royal authority for a considerable time after its publication. A prelate as loyal as Bishop Andrewes preached before the King from texts taken from the Bishops' Bible, as late as ten years after the publication of the Authorized Version. Altogether apart from the reluctance of many to discard the older versions all at once, the Bishops' Bible continued to be used in public worship in many of the churches as long as the old copies lasted. Nor can anything be deduced from the fact of a royal monopoly in the printing of the new version. The claim of the Crown to regulate the publication of the Authorized Version need not involve any claim to property rights therein, Lord Mansfield apart; but only that care ought to be taken that none but competent hands should deal with a volume on the purity of which so much depends.

That the only authority of the Authorized Version was thus that of its own intrinsic merits and its superiority over its rivals, and was not due to Court influence, royal preference, or ecclesiastical decree, ought to be a matter for heartiest satisfaction. It was well that the Scriptures in their new garb should stand on their merits, and that when God was speaking in fresh tones to the people, no alien voice should be heard. Its triumph might neither have been so rapid nor so complete had there been any attempt to force it on the nation by some royal or ecclesiastical decree. And especially in the years which succeeded its first appear-

ance ; years when the weakness of James, the folly of his son Charles, and the tyrannies and immoralities of his grandsons Charles and James, were desolating the land and outraging the Church ; it was well that the authority of the English Bible should in no way depend on the influence of a justly discredited Court, or on a royal power which many of the best in the land had deliberately disowned ; or be associated with a Crown to which no one could look up with respect.

In their Preface the translators refer with disapprobation to those who spoke as if the recognition and endowment of the Church in the days of Constantine had been a dubious blessing ; but not a few would agree rather with those to whom they refer as saying, with reference to the patronage of worldly and ambitious men, ' now is poison poured down into the Church.' So soon as the sunshine of unwonted public favour fell on the long despised followers of Christ, many began to crowd into their ranks who were converted by Imperial Edict and not by the power of Divine truth, and neither the Church nor the Bible requires more than a fair field and no favour. That was what the Authorized Version received, and nothing more, and its victory was complete.

CHAPTER VII
THE APOCRYPHA

'Our learned Selden, before he died, sent for the Most Reverend Archbishop Ussher and the Rev. Dr. Langbaine, and discoursed to them to this purpose: that he had surveyed most part of the learning that was among the sons of men; that he had his study full of books and papers of most subjects in the world: yet at that time he could not recollect any passage out of infinite books and manuscripts he was master of, wherein he could rest his soul, save out of the Holy Scriptures.'—LORD BERKELEY.

CHAPTER VII

THE APOCRYPHA

TO many readers of the English Bible the Apocrypha is almost as little known as the Koran, and their surprise is great when they come across the unfamiliar books bound up with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Yet in 1604 a company was appointed to translate these books, and in 1611 they were issued along with the other books, very much as a matter of course. Not that the translators of the Authorized Version thought of the Apocrypha as having the same authority or as being of the same value as the other books. At least from the days of Jerome it had been recognized that it stood on a very different level from these other books ; and especially among those with the tendencies which were to harden into the Puritan convictions of the next generation, the feeling was rapidly gaining ground that they ought not to appear in the same volume as the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments.

Tyndale had translated some parts of the Apocryphal books for Church Lessons, but Coverdale's version of these books was the first printed in English, and he not only separated them from the rest of the books, but wrote an interesting preface to them. 'These books and treatises, which among the fathers of old are not reckoned to be of like authority with the other books of the Bible, neither are they found in the Canon of the Hebrews.' 'These books are not judged among the doctors to be of like reputation with the other Scripture.' 'And the chief cause thereof is this : there

'be many places in them, that seem to be repugnant unto the open and manifest truth in the other books of the Bible. Nevertheless, I have not gathered them together to the intent that I would have them despised, or little set by, or that I should think them false, for I am not able to prove it.'

The only change made in the Geneva Bible, which is often said not to contain the Apocrypha, is that the Prayer of Manasses is put after Second Chronicles. In Matthew's Bible, the Apocrypha appeared with something of the nature of a protest. The third book of Maccabees first appeared as a portion of the English Bible in Taverner's version of 1549. In the year 1615, proof of the growing dislike for the Apocrypha is afforded in Archbishop Abbot's action in forbidding its being left out of the sacred volume, on pain of a year's imprisonment. Yet in 1629, an edition of the Authorized Version actually appeared without the Apocrypha, the letters APO still remaining below the tail-piece at the end of Malachi. And this seems to have been but a beginning, for we find Selden entering his protest: 'The Apocrypha is bound with the Bible of all churches that have been hitherto. Why should we leave it out?'

In the year 1643, the Westminster Assembly of Divines excluded the Apocrypha, equally with tradition, by their declaration in the Shorter Catechism that 'The Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him.' In that same year, too, the learned Dr. Lightfoot, preaching before the House of Commons in St. Margaret's, Westminster, spoke of the 'wretched Apocrypha' as 'a patchery of human inventions' which divorced the end of the law 'from the beginning of the Gospel.' In the last folio edition of the Geneva Bible, which was issued in the following year, 1644, the place usually assigned to the Apocrypha was occupied by an address from the Synod of Dort, ordering it to be omitted, and speaking of it in far less respectful terms than Coverdale had used. In the first Bible, which was issued from the Oxford Press

in the year 1675, the Apocryphal books were printed in smaller type than the others.

John Bunyan has recorded how profoundly he was comforted by the verse, 'Look at the generations of 'old, and see : did ever any trust in the Lord, and was 'confounded?' (Ecclesiasticus 10. 2), and how he was at first a little damped to find that it only occurred in an uncanonical book, but that he was comforted by regarding it as an epitome of many Scriptural promises, so that 'the word doth still oft-times shine before my face.' Eighty-five years ago, too, all Scotland was convulsed over the question whether the British and Foreign Bible Society was warranted in publishing Bibles containing the Apocrypha, in order to obtain an entrance for the Word of God into communities where it was most desirable to carry it, but where it would be vain to attempt to introduce it unless the Apocrypha were included. These were the Greek Church ; the Roman Catholic Communities, where the Apocrypha was revered and had the sanction of the Council of Trent ; the Lutheran Communities, where the decree of Trent was not allowed, but where the book was valued and allowed a certain degree of inspiration and authority ; and certain Reformed Churches on the Continent, where it was regarded, as it is in the Church of England, as useful for edification. The controversy waxed very fierce, and the end of it was that since that time the British and Foreign Bible Society has issued no copies of the Bible containing the Apocryphal books. Indeed, with rare exceptions there have been no ordinary editions of the Bible issued anywhere since that period in which the Apocrypha is included ; a fact which goes far to explain its neglect and the ignorance which prevails regarding it.

The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in advertising their list of Bibles and calling attention to the fact that they all contain the Apocrypha, say that 'it is not generally known that the only Bible which 'has legal and official warrant, besides ecclesiastical 'warrant, contains the Apocrypha.' They quote the Archbishop of Canterbury as saying that he has no hesitation in declaring that it is desirable that systematic

effort should be made to extend the knowledge of the people generally about the Apocrypha, and to encourage its more careful study ; and the late Archbishop of York as declaring that there is no doubt that for various causes the Apocrypha does not hold the place to which it is entitled in Biblical Literature, and that the attention of Christians generally should be turned towards these singularly interesting and often very beautiful books. As has just been shown, there is no Bible now on sale, whether with the Apocrypha or without, which has any legal warrant ; but the question of the place and value of the Apocrypha is of great interest in connection with the history of the Bible, while its historical importance can hardly be exaggerated.

The Apocrypha comes to us, said Professor A. B. Davidson, 'as the only utterances out of that dark night ' which came down upon the Jewish Church, when it ' slept for four hundred years, and awoke and arose, ' and found itself Christian. Even the dreams of such ' a time, the troubled moanings of such a weary trance, ' we may turn aside to look upon with a fearful interest.' These long years were a period of preparation for the coming Christ, a time of deep inward development, and therefore it is that in spite of its many inconsistencies and even absurdities, the Apocrypha helps in some measure to fill up this interval between the Old Testament and the New. 'The rise of the several ecclesiastical parties there are seen in our Lord's time straight ' for the mastery ; the phenomena of Essenism, Phariseism, and Sadduceeism ; the growing importance of ' the high-priestly office in a worldly sense ; the development of the doctrine of angels and of a future life— ' these and other spiritual forces that are seen at work ' in the days of Christ and the Apostles can be studied ' in the Apocrypha by the student of the Gospels as ' nowhere else.'

The very difference between the canonical and non-canonical books alike in tone and substance gives the latter a new significance and value, and nowhere does the simplicity or authority of Scripture shine out more grandly than in contrast to the artificiality even of the

best of the Apocryphal writings. The chasm which separates the two is very deep. In every respect, moral, doctrinal, and literary, the Apocryphal books are on a lower level than those of the Old and New Testaments. 'The harp of Judah has ceased to vibrate in them, and 'the humblest Psalm of David is worth all such poetry 'as they contain. The voice of prophecy has entirely 'ceased to be heard in them, and its cessation is accepted 'with all the resignation of conscious inferiority. Above 'all, the Divine Messianic hope, which lay at the heart 'of all that was noblest and most inspiring in Jewish 'religion, has either evaporated altogether or has lost 'its priceless personal element in exchange for a vague 'national aspiration.'

It is hardly to be wondered at, therefore, that any treatment of these books which seemed to suggest that they were on an equality with Scripture was increasingly resented as the Bible itself became better known in letter and spirit, and that the movement for their exclusion from the sacred volume should have begun as soon as the Authorized Version began to do its illuminating work. Such a movement was all the more inevitable because of the extreme and fatal position which was finally taken up by the Church of Rome at the Council of Trent. The Jews had never admitted these books into the Hebrew Canon, and although they were usually appended to the ancient Greek and Latin versions, the practice of the early Church seems to have been to call them ecclesiastical but not canonical, a distinction which was meant to make a considerable difference. Jerome expressly distinguished between the canonical writings with authority and the non-canonical writings, which he held ought not to be used to 'establish any doctrine' although they were useful for private perusal, and 'for example of 'life and instruction of manners.' Wiclif, in his day, took up very much the same position, and described them as 'without authority of belief,' a position which became very much that of the Reformers in the sixteenth century. But the Council of Trent anathematized all who do not receive 'these entire books with all their 'parts as sacred and canonical.'

After the Reformation, the Church of England adopted Jerome's view, and the sixth Article reads that 'the Church doth read [these books] for example of life and instruction of manners, but yet doth not apply them to establish any doctrine.' Luther's position was that while these Apocryphal books are not to be held to be equal to the Sacred Scriptures, they are nevertheless useful and good to read. Among the earlier Puritans a milder as well as a more severe view was taken of these books. The 'argument' prefixed to them in the Geneva Bible may be taken to represent the more favourable attitude, while the Westminster Divines may be taken as representing the less favourable, when they hold that they are not to be otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings. It is an interesting fact that the text which Queen Victoria put on Prince Albert's memorial at Balmoral was taken from one of the Apocryphal books: 'He being made perfect in a short time fulfilled a long time; for his soul pleased the Lord: therefore hastened He to take him away from among the wicked!'

The name 'Apocrypha' means hidden or concealed, and corresponds to the Hebrew phrases 'hidden books' and 'books of outsiders,' and in addition to the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, to which the name is specifically applied, there are also a number of writings which similarly profess to supplement the New Testament. These are sometimes called the New Testament Apocrypha, and include gospels, acts, apocalypses, and epistles. These, however, have always been excluded from the Canon, although they are of historical significance and interest; and in no way do they possess the importance which undoubtedly attaches to the Old Testament Apocrypha.

BOOK III
THREE CENTURIES OF SERVICE

CHAPTER I
HOW THE NEW VERSION HAD TO WORK ITS
WAY

'It is a book full of light and wisdom, will make you wise to eternal life, and furnish you with directions and principles to guide and order your life safely and prudently. There is no book like the Bible for excellent learning, wisdom, and use.'—SIR MATTHEW HALE.

BOOK III

THREE CENTURIES OF SERVICE

CHAPTER I

HOW THE NEW VERSION HAD TO WORK ITS WAY

TEN years after the appearance of the new translation, which was destined to attain such a supremacy, Bishop Andrewes, himself one of the foremost of the translators, was, as we have seen, still to be found taking his texts from the Bishops' Bible, even when preaching before the King. In the community generally it was quite a quarter of a century before the Authorized Version vindicated its superiority to the Geneva version. Even after that version ceased to be printed in England, 150,000 copies were brought in from Holland; and as late as 1649, as was already noted, an edition of the Authorized Version appeared with the Geneva notes. The Pocket-Bible, too, with which Cromwell's soldiers were provided, consisted of appropriate Scriptural quotations which were taken from the Geneva Bible.

That version is also quoted, although rarely, in the work of the Westminster Assembly, which met during the years from 1643 to 1648. What is even more noteworthy, in the Translators' Preface to their own work, Scripture quotations, which are rather loosely made, are sometimes very near the Geneva version, while the Bishops' Bible is never used. That their own version would have been used, even if it were not yet

in print, might have been taken for granted: yet we find, for example, in 1 Kings 12. 4, 'Make the grievous 'servitude of thy father, and his sore yoke, lighter'; and in 1 Cor. 14. 11: 'Except I know the power of 'the voice, I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, 'and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian to me.'

The printing of the Bishops' Bible had been stopped as soon as the new version was definitely undertaken; but even in the Church of England it was not till after the Savoy Conference in 1661, that it was finally and officially arranged that the Gospels and Epistles should be read in the Church Services from the Authorized Version. In 1662, the Book of Common Prayer appeared in its present form; and while the Psalter of the Great Bible was left undisturbed, the Gospels and Epistles, and all the longer portions of Scripture were uniformly taken from the Authorized Version. In this case the rival was not the Geneva version; but it is rather surprising that, in the argument for the change then made, the comparison was made with the Great Bible, and not with the Bishops'. Some go so far as to hold that this decision in 1661, means that for half a century, all who received orders in the Church of England had been assenting to an earlier version than that which bore on its forefront that it was 'appointed to be read 'in churches,' and had been prepared by His Majesty's special command.

The ordinary operation of the laws of the human mind naturally prevented men from hurriedly abandoning versions through which God had spoken to their souls, and from which new light was still breaking for them. It was so also in Germany; although there, too, as among ourselves, one version was ultimately to reign supreme. For dogmatic and other reasons, former versions, dear to many a heart, lingered on for a time on both sides of the North Sea; and in England it would by no means be in favour of the popular acceptance of the Authorized Version that the Puritans, who were rapidly becoming more militant, as well as more numerous, were gratuitously referred to in a somewhat scornful manner, both in the Preface and the Dedic-

tion. There was also a widespread conviction that Bancroft, who seems to have been of an autocratic temper, had used his influence and authority to colour the translation in an anti-Puritan direction, wherever that could be done. It was currently reported that he had altered it in fourteen places, that it might 'speak prelatial language.'

The translators themselves were prepared for opposition to their version ; but it is probable that they were not prepared for such criticism as that of Hugh Broughton, the greatest Hebraist of the day, and a keen supporter of the demand for a new translation. In a letter which helps to explain why he was not asked to take part in the work, he wrote to the King that he would rather be torn in pieces by wild horses than impose such a translation on poor churches ; and declared that in fifteen verses in the third chapter of Luke, the translators had a score of idle words to account for in the Day of Judgement. He was specially indignant at Bancroft, and predicted that by-and-by, James, looking down from Abraham's bosom, would behold the Archbishop in the place of woe ! In the year 1659, too, Dr. Gell, who had been Archbishop Abbot's chaplain, published an attack in which he not merely objected to trivial matters, such as the inversion of the order of words, and the undue use of supplemental terms ; but accused the translators of moulding the translation to suit their own opinions, while they put the truer renderings in the margin. Romish writers also attacked the Authorized Version for alleged 'corruptions,' which are now to be found embodied in their own version. Richard Baxter refers indignantly to the 'sectmasters who fiercely cried down the present translation of the Scriptures.'

The translators were accused of defective scholarship, of making needless changes, and even of false doctrine. Some said they had gone too far, others that they had not gone far enough. There were even demands for another translation which would supersede their work ; and when preaching before the House of Commons, in 1645, Dr. John Lightfoot urged Parlia-

ment 'to think of a review and survey of the translation 'of the Bible,' and pleaded for 'an exact, vigorous, and 'lively translation.' The Long Parliament actually made an order a few years later that a Bill should be brought in providing for a new translation. But though a Committee was appointed and held frequent meetings, nothing came of the proposal; and ere long every desire for a change had died away. When the leading scholars of the time were consulted, they pronounced the version of 1611 the 'best of any in the world,' and so the matter ended. In Scotland, also, as early as 1655, a proposal had been made for a better translation, by John Row, a scholarly member of a family of note and learning; and with the same result.

It had not been otherwise when Jerome's Vulgate appeared, although his version was destined to be declared by the Council of Trent altogether correct, above criticism, and incapable of improvement. It also was called revolutionary and heretical, an impious altering of the inspired Word, and subversive of faith in Holy Scripture. But Jerome insisted that no amount of sentiment could be a plea for a faulty Bible, and that the most venerable translation must give way if found to differ from the original text. And by-and-by men so completely forgot that this once reprobated version was only a translation, that when in 1522 it appeared between the Hebrew and Greek parallel columns of the Complutensian Polyglot, they compared its position, half humorously and half in earnest, to that of our Lord between the two thieves on the Cross. And so it was also with the English Version of 1611, although on more rational lines. It won its way steadily, and its victory when won was complete.

For more than two centuries its sway was unquestioned in the affection of the English-speaking peoples, and it won on its merits. It had meant something, no doubt, that the King and bishops and great scholars had contributed to its production; and it meant much that, unlike the Revised Version in our time, it had not to face one dominant version, but found a variety of versions competing for the popular favour. But it meant

most of all for it that at last it was possible for the whole nation to gather round one Book. The people soon saw how pre-eminently the Authorized Version was fitted to be their book ; while scholars on their part soon saw that it was the best translation which had as yet appeared. It found its way and claimed its place wherever the English language was spoken ; and when men like the Pilgrim Fathers went out to claim new territories for Christ and freedom, they carried it with them to be their rallying centre and standard, alike in Church and State ; in their religion and in their speech.

In Scotland it became the people's book in the very fullest sense, and nowhere did it lay its impress more thoroughly on the national life and thought. There had been no indigenious Scottish version ; but in 1579 an edition of the Geneva Bible had been printed in Edinburgh, and arrangements made for its circulation among the people, and for its use in the churches. In 1636, however, it was enacted in the 'Canons and 'Constitutions Ecclesiastical' that 'a Bible of the 'largest volume' should be provided for every parish and 'that the Bible should be the translation of King 'James.' That translation came among Scotsmen under unfavourable auspices alike as English, and as having been promoted by a King who had drifted far from the dearest aspirations of the land of his birth. It came with nothing whatever to recommend it, and found another version in possession ; yet by its own merits it won an unrivalled sway, and triumphed over prejudice and animosity.

In the Directory for Public Worship, ratified by the General Assembly in 1645, all that was enacted was that 'all the canonical Books of the Old and New 'Testaments shall be publicly read in the vulgar tongue 'out of the best allowed translation' ; but although the Geneva version lingered, and was even used occasionally for quotations in the Acts of the General Assembly, the Authorized Version soon reigned with an unquestioned mastery. Professor Milligan, indeed, notes that in a certain Fifeshire parish a Geneva Bible was still in use towards the end of the eighteenth century ;

but such an exception only serves to illustrate the completeness of the disappearance of the former version, which had meant so much and done so much for multitudes in earlier days. It is difficult to realize now, that those who were responsible for the Authorized Version were once popularly believed to have allowed ecclesiastical and doctrinal bias to vitiate some of their renderings ; but that it was so shows how truly it had not only to work its way, but in some respects even to fight its way. It has become such an integral part of the national life and thought, that it is difficult even to imagine a time when it was not at work in the midst ; but it was once only a version, and not the Bible of the English-speaking peoples.

CHAPTER II
AT WORK IN THE HOME

'We search the world, and truth we cull,
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven rock and written scroll,
And all old flower-fields of the soul :
And, weary seekers of the best,
We come back, laden from our quest,
To find that all the sages said
Was in the Book our mothers read.'

CHAPTER II

AT WORK IN THE HOME

ALMOST everything in Church and State depends on the home ; and these three centuries of service have seen great changes in the homes of our land, and have brought new tenderness and beauty into them. The greatest of all these changes are due to the English Bible, which has not only enthroned the father as priest in the home, but has made the Fatherhood of God in Christ the type of what an earthly father should be. The same revelation which ennobled the Puritan husband and father, ennobled his wife and children ; for were not they Divinely born, free, rational, and immortal souls like himself, around each of whom the conflict of the ages between purity and evil had to be waged, and in whom all heaven was eagerly concerned?

The way in which John Bunyan, for example, speaks of his family is altogether different from that in which even good men spoke a century before. The atmosphere was changed ; and, as Mr. Green has shown in his history, it was the widespread use of the Bible which created the new atmosphere, and sent new moral and spiritual impulses all through the nation. 'The larger geniality of the age that had passed away shrank into an intense tenderness within the narrower circle of the home. "He was as kind a father," says Mrs. Hutchison of her husband, one of the regicides, "as dear " a brother, as good a master, as faithful a friend, as the " world had." ' Those who would rob us of the Bible would rob us of all that is best in our homes and of all that a pure home-life involves. 'Where are your wife

'and family?' was the significant inquiry addressed once and again to Bunyan's Pilgrim by the way; and the Second Part of the *Pilgrim's Progress* is the author's acknowledgment that the question was a fair one. 'A solitary being is either an animal or a god,' said Aristotle; but a solitary Christian is a contradiction in terms, especially if God has set him in a home with wife and family.

The conception of the Family Bible is a very beautiful and sacred one; and even if the huge tomes which were once the fashion, and served as muniment chambers in pre-registration days, are not so common as they were, it is a splendid thing when the family has its centre and inspiration in the Word of God manifestly exalted in the midst. Those who have once read it can never forget the picture which Robert Burns has drawn of a family gathering round the Bible, in his 'Cottar's Saturday Night.' To look at the father as he 'wales a portion wi' judicious care,' and to hear them sing their evening psalm, and think of what such exercises imply, is to see how abundantly warranted was the patriotic outburst that 'from scenes like these 'old Scotia's grandeur springs; that makes her loved 'at home, revered abroad.' The home-life which gathers round the Bible and the family altar is sacred in every way; and the nation is sane and strong, free and prosperous, in proportion to the Bible-loving homes within her borders. The cry 'for altar and hearth' has its fullness of meaning only for those who have Christian homes.

The Bible in the home means much for the young who grow up therein. It is not precept that counts so much as example; and however far any may wander even from such a home, they can never doubt that religion can be real or that God has spoken to men in words they can hear and understand. It is from such homes that the Bible goes out to serve in other homes and other lands; in the sailor's box, the servant-girl's trunk, the emigrant's baggage. It cheers the mother's heart to know that, although her son is far away, he nevertheless draws near to God in His Word;

and that space vanishes as the sundered ones meet around the throne. And who can tell how many have been kept from evil, amid new surroundings and strange temptations, by the habit of daily reading some portion of God's Word? It is told of a mother of a family, whose husband was an unbeliever, who jested at religion even before his children, that she nevertheless succeeded in bringing them all up in the fear of the Lord. When she was asked how she had managed this, she said: 'Because to the authority of a father I did not oppose the authority of a mother, but that of God. From their earliest years my children have always seen the Bible on my table. This holy Book has constituted the whole of their religious instruction. I was silent, that I might allow it to speak. Did they propose a question; did they commit any fault; did they perform any good action—I opened the Bible, and the Bible answered, reprov'd, or encouraged them. The constant reading of the Scriptures has alone wrought the prodigy which surprises you.'

The Bible in the home also means much for the sorrowing and dying. 'There is no book,' said Selden, 'upon which we can rest in a dying moment but the Bible.' Nothing but the Divine pity can suffice for the infinite pathos of human life, or for the tear and wear of the ordinary daily toil; and what words are so tender for the bereaved and disappointed, the stricken and broken-hearted, as those which God has addressed to men in His Holy Word? 'He heareth the cry of the afflicted.' He hearkens to the voice of our weeping, and is the helper of the fatherless. He it is who gives songs in the night. 'The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.' 'He setteth the solitary in families, and healeth the broken in heart.' 'In Him the fatherless findeth mercy.' 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' 'The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with

'singing unto Zion ; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head ; they shall obtain gladness and joy ; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.' 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' 'I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also. I will not leave you comfortless : I will come to you. Because I live, ye shall live also.' 'Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' 'And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away.'

Cardinal Newman says : 'What Scripture specially illustrates, from its first page to its last, is God's providence ; and that is nearly the only doctrine held with a real assent by the mass of Englishmen. Hence the Bible is so great a solace and refuge to those in trouble. I repeat, I am not speaking of particular schools and parties in England, whether of the High Church or the Low ; but of the mass of piously-minded and well-living people in all parts of the community.' The English Bible, that is to say, has made God and His government real for those who come under its power. They know Him there as gracious and not as blind fate ; as making His strength perfect in their weakness, and upholding them in their conflict and sorrow. Mr. Barrie tells that a short time before his mother died, his father put her Testament into her hand, and it fell open at the fourteenth chapter of St. John. She had been a great sufferer, and she knew where to seek for comfort and strength.

Other Bibles may open at the twenty-third Psalm, and others at the third chapter of St. John. There may be sufferers, too, who make discoveries of their own in the Word far from the beaten track, and meet God out on the bare uplands where no other draws near to hear His voice. God's Word has depths in it which are only for the sorrowing and the dying. A great critic once said of a great singer that if her

heart were broken, she would be the finest singer in Europe. There are tones in the life as well as tones in the voice which sunshine alone can never bring. There are heights and depths in Scripture which can only be discovered by those who draw near by the way of anguish and pain. In the time of trouble God hides His tried ones in His pavilion, and they see new wonders in His Word, which is His Tent of Meeting for those whose lives are shadowed and who have been driven out into the wilderness of sorrow and loss. There are riches in the Bible which are never discovered or understood except by the lonely and the anguish-enlightened.

When Oliver Cromwell was dying, he asked that Philippians 4. 11-13 should be read to him. 'Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned . . . to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound . . . and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' And then he repeated the words of the passage to himself. When the Apostle spoke of his contentment and submission to the will of God in all conditions, he said: 'It's true, Paul, you have learned this, and attained to this measure of grace; but what shall I do? Ah, poor creature, it is a hard lesson for me to take out! I find it so.' But when he came to the words which followed, faith began to work, and his heart found comfort and support, and he said: 'He that was Paul's Christ is my Christ too'; and so he drew water out of the wells of salvation. And such an experience is just that of unrecorded multitudes, writ large, in which God's Word restores the faith of the stricken, cheers the downcast and chases despair away; revives courage and binds up the wounds of the struggling and driven.

Nor is the blessed influence of the Bible in the home confined to any particular age, or to those in special need. It is for the ordinary as well as for the exceptional, and there should be nothing hid from its gracious power. Very specially is it for those who are bearing the burden and heat of the day; for the unromantic

years of middle life ; for all who journey on the beaten track of the commonplace, neither rising with more than eagle's flight into the unseen, nor running in the way, but walking steadily on, and doing their day's work in courage and faith. Many are the springs which well up for such travellers by the dusty wayside ; new wells opened and old wells reopened ; and it is certain that our homes will be pure and noble, holy and inspiring, just as the Bible is honoured in them and its precepts obeyed ; and its quickening and comfort are enjoyed from day to day. There is no more tender or sacred word in our language than 'home.' Our hearts grow soft as we think of 'Home, Sweet Home,' and we pity the nations which have only one word for 'house' and 'home.' But let it be clearly understood that it is to the three centuries of service during which the Authorized Version has held on its way in power and grace that we owe the strength and beauty of our home-life at its best.

CHAPTER III

AT WORK IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH

‘ Most wondrous Book! bright candle of the Lord!
Star of eternity! The only star
By which the bark of man can navigate
The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss
Securely; only star, which rose on time,
And, on its dark and troubled billows, still
As generation, drifting slowly by,
Succeeded generation, threw a ray
Of heaven’s own light, and, to the hills of God—
The everlasting hills—pointed the sinner’s eye.’

POLLOK.

CHAPTER III

AT WORK IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH

JUST because of what the English Bible has been doing in the home throughout these three centuries of service, its influence has spread far beyond the limits of the Christian home to the social and public life of the nation ; to win men and women and little children for Christ, to set the solitary in families, and to create new homes to be centres of light and leading in turn. The philosopher Plato thought of the home as such an anti-social citadel of selfishness that he proposed to abolish the family ; but it is through the family and the home that the Bible blesses mankind most. The Church began in a family and a home, and it is still made up of Christian homes.

We find that during these bygone centuries the Bible has ever been busy in the great work of bringing in the Kingdom of God, and inciting and satisfying the searcher for truth. Like its Divine Author, it knows our frame and remembers that we are dust. It speaks every language of the human heart and every dialect of every tongue. The spirit of the sacred writers lives on in the English translation ; and although the Bible originated in the East, it has found a welcome and a home in the West, as if it were native to the soil. It begins by letting the needy see their need, and it ends by satisfying every true yearning in such a way as to lead on through a Divine discontent to fullness of fellowship with God. In proportion as the Bible is honoured does the stream of blessing flow. St. Paul was led to the deliberate conviction that God's Word

could work even through those who were moved to proclaim it by an evil spirit of envy and strife. He believed that if only the Divine truth gets an entrance into the mind and heart, it will do its own blessed work, although the channel through which the stream has flowed is neither perfect nor pure. The truth is great, and will prevail even although it is presented in a poor and unworthy fashion. 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.' The Bible carries its own warrant with it, and its own Divine power. The laws of the universe are on its side, for this is God's universe; and ours is a redeemed world, even if it be a fallen world. Men have come under the illumining and converting power of the Bible who began to study it in order to attack and confute it. Those who circulate the Bible may do so with absolute confidence in the inherent power of the Divine message, not only to lay men's needs bare, but to satisfy the longings it has aroused for God and His eternal life.

One of the outstanding facts of human life is that man was made for God, and that there are depths in his being which none but Christ can satisfy. The idols which exist everywhere in the dark heathen lands show how deep is this natural yearning of the heart of man for God. Man is a religious being; and when he is ignorant of the true God, he will build an altar to the unknown. Into the midst of all this yearning and all this darkness, the Bible came as a river of life. There had been tiny springs elsewhere which sent forth their streams, for God has never left Himself without a witness; but this is the river of God in all its majesty and fullness, and nowhere has it flowed more wonderfully into the lives of men than through our own Authorized Version.

Nothing has supreme authority for the seeking soul but this Word of God. It is significant that when such a spiritual genius as Bunyan first introduces us to his Pilgrim he has already the Bible in his hand. Bunyan himself was never out of the Book; and he had no faith in any pilgrimage which was not Bible-inspired, and which did not make much of the Bible as the Book

of God. Much of the charm and much of the spiritual power of the *Pilgrim's Progress* itself are due to the extent to which it is saturated with Bible truth. And Bunyan's testimony and experience have been true of seeking souls all the ages through.

In the time of the Methodist awakening, when in some respects the Gospel was first preached to the poor in England, one of the sobriquets of the Society which Wesley formed in Oxford was 'The Bible-moths,' a name which speaks for itself. The new place given to the Bible was at once the cause of the Revival and its result. In the dreary ages of Socinianism and worldliness, the Bible had fallen into neglect. Hannah More tells that in all the parish of Cheddar she only found one Bible, and that it was used to prop up a flower-pot. The first indication that the tide was turning was to be found in the new prominence assigned to the Word—some of the most important editions of the Authorized Version appeared then; and in the new willingness to hear what God was saying to perishing mankind. In earlier times, too, in Scotland, when the light of the Reformation was breaking, one of the nick-names of those who sought to be obedient to the truth which God was revealing was 'New Testamenters,' another name which speaks for itself. Like Him who gave it and of whom it tells, the Bible gives rest to the weary and satisfies the longing soul. It can speak to the waifs and strays, to the flotsam and jetsam, to those who are all battered and torn among the wreckage, and call them to newness of life. And while every legitimate help to understand it better should be welcomed, since it works through the understanding and never by magic, any helps which come between the soul and Scripture itself are no better than hindrances in disguise.

It is but a step from thinking of the Bible as satisfying the needs of the seeker for truth, even as it reveals to him what his real needs are, to thinking of it in connection with the work of revival. How far it is the ideal to think of revivals from any other viewpoint than that it is God's will that they should

be continuous, cannot be discussed here. But that the Church owes much to times of blessing and quickening is beyond question ; just as it is also beyond question that there is nothing we need more in these days than a revival which will sweep all over the land and make religion real for rich and poor, for young and old alike. It may be that in God's mercy this will come through the revived attention which this Tercentenary should cause to be given to the Scriptures, and every celebration ought to have this end in view. Revival can only come through the simplicities of the faith being set forth anew, as they are therein declared ; and through the faithfulness of believers to the high things of which the Bible alone tells in their fullness.

It is through the Bible alone that the Divine message can reach all sorts and conditions of men in such a way as to result in widespread quickening and uplift. Its lucid simplicity appeals to the men of culture and intellect, and yet speaks to the untutored in their own speech. It comes to men in the cities and to men on the moorlands alike ; and however much the dialects of the English dales may differ from those of the Scottish glens or the Welsh valleys, as they all differ among themselves, all alike can hear God speaking to them in their own tongue in the English Bible, and all alike have rejoiced in its message of salvation. There can be no other starting-point for the revival for which so many are longing and praying and even looking, the revival which will chase all indifference away and touch the entire community, but the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. When Mr. Moody was in Scotland, he testified that his intercourse with inquirers was more satisfactory and fruitful there than in any other land in this respect, that there was almost always some acquaintance with Scripture to which he could helpfully appeal.

It is from the Bible as Divine that the abiding inspiration has come, which has sent out the most successful missionaries and evangelists to gather in the lost ; and no evangelical agency can expect to prosper unless it keeps the Bible in the very forefront. Every

revival movement which has ever blessed our land has gathered round the Book ; and the work which makes strong and enduring Christian men and women, and lifts them above the fascination of every heresy, is that which goes down into the depths where in Scripture itself the eternal springs are for ever rising. Just in proportion as any work of ingathering exalts the Bible, and is permeated by it alike in letter and spirit, does it pursue healthy and fruitful lines and advance to full fruition. One who shared in the great revival of 1859, and who has not long since gone home, has told how it all gathered round the Bible ; and that, unlike some other such movements before and since, it was in no way associated with any man or organization. He was a University student at the time ; and when he came home from college one April, he found that for months there had been a Gospel meeting every night in the kitchen of his father's farm. But there had been little or no regular preaching ; at any rate, those who came had not gathered to hear anyone in particular preach. They had just been gathering round the Word and waiting on God therein in prayer, and the results were momentous, wonderful, and enduring. In Scotland and Ireland, at least, there has been nothing as widespread or abiding since ; and it may be that similar results, or even greater results—for the Word of God is not bound—would be once more enjoyed were there more faith in the inherent power of the Divine Word itself, and less dependence on machinery of man's devising.

Sometimes it has even been found helpful to keep the actual Book visibly in evidence. One who was used long ago among the Arabs has told that he kept the open Bible ever in his hand as he spoke. 'He felt 'that his power was in the Book' ; and so conscious was he of this, that he kept it literally in sight wherever he went ; not as a charm, but as the visible token that all his trust was in God, and that the work which endures must be wholly of Him and His Word. And whether we think of the great revival of heart religion which we call the Reformation ; or of the Puritan Revival which kept the fire burning on the altar

in our land when the Counter-Reformation was doing deadly work everywhere else ; or of the Methodist Revival, either in its earlier phases when so many were won for Christ, or in its later phases when the Primitives came to be such a blessing to the villages of England—we always find that the good work gathered round the Bible, and especially round the English Bible. It is through its pages that both preparation and call have come to those whom God has used most, alike in the homelands and in the regions beyond. Not otherwise can there be an adequate sense of human need, or of the fullness of the Divine preparation for it. Not otherwise can men see the corroding, corrupting power of sin in the light of the Cross. Not otherwise can those who discover something of the immensity of their debt to Christ on the Cross come under the dominion of His constraining love. Not otherwise is that compassion for souls, that yearning pity for the weary and heavy laden, begotten which makes men and women Christlike in their endeavours to spread the blessing and share the light.

All this was made manifest, also, in the Evangelical Revival, with its Bible Societies organized for work both at home and abroad, as well as in similar movements since. God's Word has been the hammer which has broken the idols in pieces ; the light which has shown men the way in which they ought to walk ; the stream at which the thirsty have quenched their thirst and the hand which has lifted up the fallen, bound up the broken in heart, and guided the faltering. The Evangelists have spoken as touchingly in English in our own time as they did in Greek in the far past ; and although their message never works by magic, but always along moral and spiritual lines, it does work as if it were a holy charm. God's Spirit works through the Book which He Himself inspired, and which He has so marvellously preserved that it might be rendered into many tongues.

CHAPTER IV

AT WORK IN THE NATION AND THE STATE

'Let mental culture go on advancing, let the natural sciences progress in ever greater extent and depth, and the human mind widen itself as much as it desires—beyond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity as it shines forth in the Gospels, it cannot go.'—GOETHE

CHAPTER IV

AT WORK IN THE NATION AND THE STATE

DURING these three centuries of service the Authorized Version has done a great work, not only in the home and the Church, but also in the wider sphere of the national life. It has played a great part in the development of the nation on broad, generous lines ; and has had far more to do with the prosperity of Great Britain and her offshoots, as compared with the Latin races, than any racial difference. It has not only made Britons free, it has made them fit to be free, which is vastly more difficult and more important. These three centuries have seen far-reaching changes ; one king beheaded, another driven into exile, and power passing from monarch and oligarchy to the sovereign people. Men see now that the State is not the evil world in another guise, something to be ignored if not resisted by Christians in their efforts to bring in the Kingdom of God. They recognize now that it is an ordinance of God ; that the ideal is a holy nation, a kingdom of saints, and it is the fuller knowledge of the Scriptures which has brought about this change, as well as the new outlook and new endeavour after public righteousness to which it has led.

‘We must educate our masters,’ said a statesman when our working-men first received the franchise ; and the only enduring or worthy education in self-government, and the government of the nation, the only guide for voters which is never out of date, is to be found in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The

Bible everywhere honours patriotism, and puts the love of the fatherland next to the love of God and the love of the home. Bible Christians always seek to make the nation a nation of saints, fearing God and having no other fear. There is no real toleration among the indifferent. The Agnostic can be, and has been, a persecutor. It is only those who have entered into their birthright as free, who have the Bible respect for the rights of all men as made for God, and as incapable of doing their true work or finding their rightful place except in His service.

From the very first the spread of the Authorized Version made for progress and freedom. It was the study of the English Bible which in a single generation raised so many in the seventeenth century from the puerilities, superstitions, and prejudices of the Middle Ages, and made them strong, far-seeing men ; and tender, heroic women. It raised the nation at one bound to the foremost place among the nations of Europe, and more than aught else has kept it there ever since. The only enduring national prosperity is that which is based on loyalty and obedience to the Word of God. Piety which is nourished on manuals of devotion and the lives of the saints is of the hothouse order. It is those alone who are nourished on the Bible who can stand the storm and flourish in the open air. It is they who become explorers and reformers, colonists and pioneers of Empire and the truth.

It may be true that the Puritans, for whom the Bible did so much, sometimes made a questionable use of it. They did not always study it historically, as when they applied Old Testament teaching about exterminating the Canaanites and Amalekites to their own times, and overlooked the later revelation of the New Testament. Nor did they always study it with a due sense of proportion, as when they found more in it about predestination and God's wrath than about infinite love and the free offer of the great salvation. Some of them were arbitrary, too, in their treatment of the letter of Scripture, and in their mystical use of its prophecies and types. But they never made too much of it ; and

the more they made of it, the more it made of them. They and their kindred in other lands saved the sacred cause of civil and religious freedom in the dark days of reaction in the Church and of absolutism in the State. They took their Bibles with them to the market-place and to the workshop, and bought and sold with its words on their lips and in their hearts. It was their guide in every part of their life ; and when duty called them to take up arms, they charged the enemy with the sword of the Lord and of Gideon in their hands, and singing David's psalms. It made men like Faithful and Great-heart and Gaius ; and women like Mercy and Christiana. ' In the poetry of Milton, in the mental history of Bunyan,' says Prothero, ' the power of the Psalms is strongly marked. Their influence is still more clearly seen in ' the career of Oliver Cromwell, the foremost figure in ' the stirring times of the Puritan revolution, the strongest ' type of the stern religion which raised him to the ' summit of fame and fortune. The spirit that he read ' into the Psalms governed his actions at each supreme ' crisis of his stormy life ; the last striking stages in ' his career are marked by quotations from the Psalms ; ' in his private letters, his public despatches, his ' addresses to Parliament, the imagery, metaphors, and ' language of the Psalms drop from his lips, or his ' pen, as if by constant meditation he had made their ' phraseology a part of his very life.'

Through Civil War and revolution, through far-reaching reform and peaceful expansion, through agony and toil, through reaction and temporary defeat, there has arisen an Empire on which the sun never sets, as well as the great Republic of the West, out of what was once a kingdom of very limited resources. And in all that is best in this development, and in the changes which the years have wrought, the Bible has played its part, and has been the true strength and inspiration of an Imperial people, seeking to work out its destiny in freedom and faith. This is freely admitted by the ordinary historian, as well as by those who write in praise of the Word. In 1611 one of the most outstanding features of the political situation was the power,

and, even more, the prestige, of Spain. King James could never get away from his instinctive reverence for it ; although, as events were to show, it was far from being as great as it was supposed to be, or had once been. Once and again he exposed himself to needless humiliation, and risked the indignation and anger of his own people in his desire to secure a Spanish alliance for his son ; like some poor relation determined to win the recognition of a relative of overwhelming influence and wealth. Even Oliver Cromwell, with all his wondrous insight, could never free himself from the feeling that Spain was still the foe to be mainly feared. But to-day the position is wholly changed. Spain has been stripped of her colonial wealth. Treasure galleons no longer seek her harbours laden with the riches of the New World. There is now none so poor to do her reverence. To compare her in any respect with Britain only serves to accentuate the fact that the one is as poor and weak as the other is rich and powerful. And more than anything else, it is her English Bible, and what grows out of it, that has made Britain prosperous and great and free ; just as the want of such a national treasure has not only led to Spain losing her liberties and her political power, but has robbed her in connection with literature and art as well. For want of the Bible she has been left in superstition and degradation, the prey of unscrupulous ecclesiastics, incapable statesmen, and unbelieving agitators.

Lord Macaulay tells in his history how James the Second at his coronation ordered Sancroft, the Archbishop, to abridge the ritual. The reason publicly assigned for this was that the day was too short for all that was to be done ; but the real reason was that the King wished to remove certain things which were highly offensive to him as a zealous Romanist. In particular, says the historian, the ceremony of presenting the sovereign with a richly-bound copy of the English Bible, and of exhorting him to prize above all earthly treasure a volume which he had been taught to regard as adulterated with false doctrines, was omitted. That was most significant of much that was

impending, both as regards the conflict for freedom and as regards the ultimate fate of the King himself. Such schemes as those of that priest-ridden yet immoral monarch perish when the English Bible gets its due place, like some foul fungus which cannot abide the light. The teaching of history clearly is that it was more than a mere coincidence that this King who set the Bible aside was himself set aside. He would fain have banished it from the realm, and he himself was driven out; while there lay before it in the days to come a career of usefulness and influence such as can never have entered then into the imagination either of its friends or its foes.

So long as the Bible was honoured and prized in the land, whether under Cromwell or William, not only were the rights of man respected at home, but the nation was respected abroad. But under Charles the Second, when the Bible was flouted and despised, not only did persecution and tyranny abound in the homelands, but for the first and last time in our history foreign guns were heard in the Thames, and the voluptuous monarch was the pensioner of France. As for his royal brother, who attempted to banish the Bible which owed its translation to his grandfather, there was nothing but ever-deepening degradation, until at last he was driven for ever from the throne of his fathers. Oliver Cromwell's was the Bible-born Imperialism which, according to Macaulay, 'arrested the sails of the Libyan pirates and the persecuting fires of Rome.' He dictated terms to Louis the Fourteenth, the Duke of Tuscany, and the tyrants of Tunis and Algiers. He lowered the proud flag of Spain before which so many had cowered so long. It was his ambition to make the name of England as great as that of Rome had been in her palmyest days, and as much honoured; and men never knew how truly he had done this, nor what was the source of his inspiration, until he was gone. 'Then,' said Pepys, 'it is strange how everybody do nowadays reflect upon Oliver, and commend him, what brave things he did and made all the neighbours fear him, while here a prince, come in with all the love and

'prayers and good liking of his people, hath lost it 'so soon, that it is a miracle what way a man could 'devise to lose so much in so little time.'

It was no Jingoism or mere earth-hunger that made Cromwell great. It was the true Imperialism born of the study of his Bible, and the determination to uphold the glory of the flag by making it the synonym for righteousness, the messenger of help for God's oppressed ones all over the earth. His was never the mailed fist of the bully, but the long arm of the champion of liberty, toleration, and truth. And whatever else the spread of the British Empire may have meant; in so far as it has set the slave free and brought liberty to the captive, as it has so often done, and in so far as it has brought the peace of God to those who were for ever embroiled in petty wars, and that also it has often done; it has been inspired by the English Bible as it has influenced countless homes all over the land, and filled many hearts with its passion for justice and its own hatred of oppression. More than that, the most outstanding of our great Pro-Consuls, of those who have helped to build up an imperial power which, with all its failings, is the greatest engine of progress the world has ever known, have been men who were not ashamed to acknowledge that the Bible was their daily guide, and that they owed to it all they had and all they were. If from the Empire's roll-call of its explorers and pioneers, its statesmen and leaders, the names of those who were Bible-students were removed, the list left would be a very attenuated and impoverished one. If the Bible itself were removed from the national record, there would be little left which would be worth recording.

It is character that tells alike in Empire-building and trade expansion; and nothing has made for high character and the saving sense of fair-play among our pioneers of Empire and trade like the influence, direct and indirect, of the Bible among the people. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of the national seriousness. Its stories and teachings, its whole atmosphere and spirit, have been the subsoil in which the plant of honour has taken deepest root, and out of

which it grows in its purest and most enduring forms. It affects even those who themselves are not readers of the Bible ; and does more even than the Navy to make the Empire secure and strong. It is to the sense of honour, and the Bible-begotten sense of justice and fair-play, that the British Raj in India and elsewhere owes its continuance, that the word 'character' has been naturalized in Japan, and that there are lands where the oath by the 'Anglesa parole,' the word of an Englishman, is the most convincing of all. The Bible has done more than aught else ; more than the flag, more than our trade, more than the Pax Britannica, more than the colonizing instincts of the Anglo-Saxon race, more than the Navy League, more than the British gift of governing subject races wisely and well, to bind the scattered branches of the English-speaking peoples into one great homogeneous community which stands for justice and freedom, for progress and peace.

One who was a man of keen insight and a subtle observer, although he drifted out of the way himself, the late Cardinal Newman, had a vivid perception of this character-building influence of the Authorized Version ; and his testimony is all the more valuable that in later years he was so largely an outsider. 'Bible religion,' he said, 'is both the recognized title and the best description of English religion. It consists, not in rites and creeds, but mainly in having the Bible read in Church, in the family, and in private. Now I am far indeed from undervaluing that mere knowledge of Scripture which is imparted to the population thus promiscuously. At least in England, it has to a certain point made up for great and grievous losses in its Christianity. The reiteration again and again, in fixed course in the public service, of the words of inspired teachers under both Covenants, and that in grave, majestic English, has in matter of fact been to our people a vast benefit. It has attuned their minds to religious thoughts ; it has given them a high moral standard ; it has served them in associating religion with compositions which, even humanly considered, are among the most sublime and

' beautiful ever written ; especially, it has impressed upon them a series of Divine providences in behalf of man from his creation to his end, and, above all, the words, deeds, and sacred sufferings of Him in whom all the providences of God centre.'

How far the English Bible has inspired those who have done most for the nation, by doing battle with slavery and corruption, ignorance and disease, with the opium trade, and the traffic in strong drink among the native races, can be seen by a reference to the work of noble Christian patriots like Wilberforce and Granville Sharp, Robert Raikes, John Howard, and Elizabeth Fry. God's Word illumined them and many others like them since, and guided them into large and gracious conceptions and deeds. It let them see that patriotism does not consist in waving the flag, and still less in flouting other flags. It consists in keeping the escutcheon of the nation clean ; in delivering the land from the foul blots of cruelty, drunkenness, and lust, oppression, injustice, and hunger ; in bringing the legislation and administration of the Empire into harmony with the mind of God ; in giving every citizen cause to love the fatherland, so that the cry ' For altar and hearth ' will be a mockery for none ; and for all that, nothing has been so fruitful as the circulation and spread of the Bible, and just in proportion as it dominates and sanctifies the life and thought of our time will the nation be truly prosperous and great and free. It is not too much to say that a nation of those who study and love the Scriptures need fear no foe, so wise and far-seeing, so strong and clean, will it make them ; and so truly will it bring them into line with the eternal laws of righteousness which rule the universe. The patriotism which the Bible inspires is sane and healthy and enduring ; and just because it is Divinely guided, it respects the rights of others, even as it knows how to defend its own.

CHAPTER V

INFLUENCE ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

'The Scripture affords us a Divine pastoral in the Song of Solomon, consisting of two persons and a double chorus, as Origen rightly judges; and the Apocalypse of St. John is a majestic image of a high and stately tragedy, shutting and intermingling her solemn scenes and acts with a seven-fold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies.'—JOHN MILTON.

CHAPTER V

INFLUENCE ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

NEXT to the wonderful work which our English Bible has done in the home, in the Church, and in the nation, nothing is more remarkable than the way in which it has guided our English speech and inspired our English literature. There are few facts connected with literature regarding which there is more general agreement than that the Authorized Version is a masterpiece of English, and that it has exercised a great and beneficent influence on the development of the English language. 'As a mere literary monument, the English 'version of the Bible remains the noblest example of 'the English tongue.' Critics of all schools, who agree about hardly anything else, are agreed that it is the richest repository of thought and imagery, the best model of pure style, which the language possesses. It is a library rather than a book. It has something in it for every seeker ; something for every pure taste. Its poetry reaches loftier heights and fathoms deeper depths than any other. Its history carries us further back, and takes us further into the secret place of the Most High than any other. It lets us see things from the standpoint of God, and *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Our English Bible must be more than literature, or it is nothing ; but it is literature, and literature at its best. Whatever our list of 'best books' may be, the Bible must not only be on it, but unquestionably first.

'It is God's Book as no other book can be; profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.' But apart from that, for the noblest poetry and unique history, for practical wisdom and helpful guidance through the mazes of life, and for a portrait gallery of truly human men and women such as can be found nowhere else, it is the most wonderful combination the world of letters has ever seen. The moral qualities of the translators influenced their literary work all through. John Milton was no mean judge, and his testimony is that 'there are no songs to be compared with the songs of Zion; no orations equal to those of the prophets; and no politics like those which the Scriptures teach.' 'In the very critical art of composition, it may be easily made appear over all kinds of lyrical poesy to be incomparable.'

The place occupied by the English Bible in English literature is as unique as the place of the Bible itself in the literature of the race. As Caedmon's paraphrases were the first true English poetry; as Bede, the translator of St. John, was the first writer of Old English prose; as Wiclif, who first gave the whole Bible to the English nation, may be regarded as the Father of modern English prose in virtue of the clear, homely English of his translation; and as Luther's German version was the book which did most to fix the German language and guide it into the grooves in which it has moved ever since—so it has been both as regards language and literature with the Authorized Version. Ever since it appeared it has dominated, and in a sense hallowed, all English speech and writing. This is not the testimony of enthusiasts for the Bible only, but of literary and linguistic experts. As Professor Sweet says: 'The publication of Tindale's translation of the New Testament, in 1525, paved the way for the Authorized Version of 1611, which made Early Modern English what it has ever since been . . . the sacred or liturgical language of the whole English-speaking race.' Mr. Green, too, speaks eloquently of the conspicuous influence which from the first it exerted on ordinary speech. 'The mass of picturesque allusion and illus-

'tration which we borrow from a thousand books, our fathers were forced to borrow from one; and the borrowing was all the easier and the more natural that the range of the Hebrew literature fitted it for the expression of every phase of feeling.' 'Even to common minds this familiarity with grand poetic imagery in prophet and apocalypse gave a loftiness and ardour of expression, that with all its tendency to exaggeration and bombast we may prefer to the slipshod vulgarisms of the shopkeeper of to-day.'

On all hands it is agreed that throughout the more modern history of the Anglo-Saxon race no book has had so great an influence on the standard of English literature wherever the language prevails, and on the vocabulary and style of English writers generally, as the Authorized Version of the English Bible. It has gone with the emigrant to the ends of the earth, to fix the standard and preserve the purity of the language and the integrity of its literature in the Greater Britain beyond the seas. It went with the Pilgrim Fathers to New England, with the result that even when the great Republic of the West was sundered from the Empire, it remained loyal to the mother-tongue, and to all which that involves. Nowhere is there more enthusiasm for the English classics, or a greater determination to claim a share in the inheritance of letters, than among those who are furthest from the homeland, and nowhere is there a deeper interest in the English Bible than there. Nor can anyone enter with understanding and sympathy into the treasures of that vast and ever-growing inheritance; whether he dwells in the Old World or the New, beneath the Southern Cross, in the wheat-lands of Saskatchewan, or on the lonely South African veldt, unless he has some acquaintance with the English Bible, so much has it entered into the very texture of all that is best in our national literature in all its branches. It requires but a brief examination of authors so different as Shakespeare and Milton, Scott and Carlyle, Browning, Ruskin, and Tennyson, to show that it is not merely that Scripture is often quoted and alluded to, but that its words and images

have entered into the very warp and woof of the cloth of gold which they have woven for the generations which follow after. To be ignorant of the Bible is to lack the key of the treasury alike in literature and grace.

As the result of his experience as an Inspector of primary schools, Mr. Matthew Arnold said that the English Bible introduces the only element of true poetry, the one elevating and inspiring element that enters into the education of multitudes in our land. The protest against excluding it from our schools has come from every quarter. It reaches every class, and influences all sorts and conditions of men, as nothing else in literature can. Books are the true levellers, and the Bible is the truest leveller of all ; always levelling up, however, rather than down. Just as gunpowder put the man-at-arms in his leather jerkin on a level with the knight in his armour of steel, the printing-press has brought the Bible to the poor as well as to the rich, to the uncultured as well as to the learned. In its sacred simplicity and Divine depth it appeals to yearnings and satisfies needs which are common to every class. It is the great conciliatory, uniting force amid so much that makes for antagonism and disruption. It is to be found on the castle table and in the cottage of the working man ; and it speaks the same message to every home in which it is read. It is read by peasant and prince, by mill-girl and countess, in Eton and Harrow and in Board Schools, in the Universities and the Boys' Brigade. Of the six thousand words in the Authorized Version, not more than two hundred and fifty are not in common use ; and that is largely because it has set the standard, created the taste, and been as an Academy of Letters in the land.

All that this means is seldom seen to be as wonderful as it is, or even realized, because it has always been such an outstanding fact in our lives. The Bible as we have known it since ever we knew anything, speaks to the simplest as well as to the most thoughtful, to the busy worker and the student recluse, to those who are just setting out on the pathway of life and to those who are putting their armour off ; and speaks to them

all alike with authority, dignity, and power. The most profound cannot fathom its depths, while the simple-hearted get all they need or can carry away ; and however far-reaching its philosophy may be, it never ceases to be the book of the many, yea, of the all. It is said to be one of the most severe tests that can be applied to a book, that those who read it with enjoyment when they are young should be able to enjoy it as much when they are old. It often happens that when books are re-read in these circumstances, their readers are puzzled to think what they can ever have found in them, they now seem so superficial and commonplace. But not only does the Bible stand this test and even invite it, the witness of multitudes of the wisest and best, of all ranks and classes, is that they never read even those parts of it with which they are most familiar without discovering new beauties, coming under its power more than ever, and finding in their own blessed experience that the half had not been told of its wonders, and never can be told.

In other references to the worth of Scripture, we can listen only to those for whom the Bible is more than literature, for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and spiritual things are spiritually discerned ; but in regard to its value for the language and for literature, the testimonies of ordinary men of letters may fairly be adduced ; and these are very many and very varied in character. 'I am heartily glad,' said Landor, 'to witness your veneration for a Book which, to say nothing of its holiness or authority, contains more specimens of genius and taste than any other volume in existence.' 'No translation our own country ever yet produced,' said Swift, 'hath come up to that of the Old and New Testaments ; and I am persuaded that the translators of the Bible were masters of an English style much fitter for that work than any we see in our present writings ; the which is owing to the simplicity which runs through the whole.' 'The most learned, acute, and diligent student,' said Sir Walter Scott, 'cannot, in the longest life, obtain an entire knowledge of this one volume. The more deeply

'he works the mine, the richer and more abundant he finds the ore ; new light continually beams from this source of heavenly knowledge, to direct the conduct and illustrate the work of God and the ways of men ; and he will at last leave the world confessing that the more he studied the Scriptures, the fuller conviction he had of his own ignorance, and of their inestimable value.' When he was near the end of his life, Dr. Johnson said : 'I hope to read the whole Bible once every year, as long as I live. . . . I devoted this week to the perusal of the Bible, and have done little secular business.' 'The Bible thoroughly known,' said Froude, 'is a literature in itself . . . the rarest and richest in all departments of thought or imagination which exists.' 'At the time when that odious style,' said Macaulay, 'which deforms the writings of Hall and Lord Bacon, was almost universal, appeared that stupendous work, the English Bible ; . . . a book which if everything else in our language should perish, would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power. The respect which the translators felt for the original, prevented them from adding any of the hideous decorations then in fashion. The groundwork of the version, indeed, was of an earlier age.'

The Authorized Version has often been called a well of English undefiled, and much of its purity is due to the fact that its water was drawn from the ancient springs. It has the universal note which gives it a place among the immortals. It has the Divine touch, even in its diction, which lifts it above the limitations of locality and time, and makes it valid and living for all the ages. Like a rare jewel fitly set, the sacred truths of Scripture have found such suitable expression in it, that we can hardly doubt that they filled those who made it with reverence and awe, so that they walked softly in the Holy Presence.

CHAPTER VI

SOME FAMOUS EDITIONS OF THE AUTHORIZED
VERSION

‘This book of stars lights to eternal bliss.’—GEORGE HERBERT.

CHAPTER VI

SOME FAMOUS EDITIONS OF THE AUTHORIZED VERSION

SOME of the famous editions have already been referred to incidentally, and only a few of the others can now be enumerated. The first two editions issued by the Cambridge University Press, which were also the first issued by others than the King's printers, are of great interest. The former of these appeared in 1629, and was printed by Thomas and John Buck; the latter in 1638, printed by Thomas Buck and Roger Daniel. The 1629 edition bore traces of the most careful revision of the text, the italics, and the margin, by unknown hands; and in the 1638 edition this revision was more carefully and consistently carried out by the scholars Goad, Ward, Boyse, and Mead. According to Mr. Dore, the latter is probably the best edition of King James's Version ever published; although Dr. Scrivener would probably claim that honour for the Cambridge issue of 1858, which he employed as the model or standard copy. The edition of 1638 is the Bible referred to by Scott in *Redgauntlet*, where he tells of a lady in Edinburgh in reduced circumstances, who, although she lived in a room 'on the head of the highest stair in the 'Covenant Close,' 'never read a chapter except out of 'the Cambridge Bible printed by Daniel, and bound in 'embroidered velvet.'

In spite, however, of the evident care which was taken to correct and avoid errors, each of these editions gave birth to errors which became notorious, and persisted

through many subsequent issues. That of 1629 made 1 Tim. 4. 16 read, 'Take heed to *thy* doctrine,' instead of 'Take heed to *the* doctrine.' That of 1638 put 'ye' instead of 'we' in Acts 6. 3, 'whom ye may 'appoint'; an error which was falsely imputed to ecclesiastical bias, and gave rise to much recrimination. The former error kept its place down to 1762, and the latter at least as late as 1682.

In modern times there have also been famous editions which deserve mention. The Cambridge Paragraph Bible of 1873 has been generally recognized as the first serious attempt to construct a critical edition of the Authorized Version. The Variorum Bible of Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1876 and 1888, provides a digest of the best accredited various readings and renderings of the text, in footnotes for the English reader; and so far as results go puts him practically on a level with the classical scholar. Bagster's editions of the Bible, too, are monuments of minute and unpretending diligence. As for the splendid series of issues from the Oxford University Press, it is impossible to speak too highly of the service they have rendered to the sacred cause of Bible study. They have come as near perfection as human skill can come; and all the resources of the paper-maker, bookbinder, and printer, at their best, have been freely lavished on their preparation and embellishment. It is now (1911) two hundred and thirty-six years since the Authorized Version was first published by the Oxford Press, and now there are a hundred editions of the Oxford Bible. Nor is it without significance that in spite of every attack on the Bible, in spite even of the appearance on the scene of the Revised Version, the Oxford record is one of continuous growth. In 1875 half a million of copies of these Bibles in the Authorized Version were sold, and in 1885 seven hundred thousand. In 1895 the number had risen to a million, while ten years later it was actually one million one hundred and twenty thousand.

There are other three famous editions which may further be referred to, inasmuch as they exercised an abiding influence on all subsequent editions. Bishop

Lloyd's edition, which was published in London in 1701, is memorable as the first to contain the marginal dates which are now so familiar. They were taken from Ussher's *Annales veteris et novi Testamenti*, and are of very varying value. Some of them, indeed, are rather startling in view of modern discoveries. They have not been materially amended since they first appeared, and their only authority, of course, is that of the eminent scholar who prepared them according to the light he had. There seems to be no reason now why the Authorized Version should be burdened, and even prejudiced, by what is no real part of it as such. Dr. Paris's edition of 1762, which was issued from the Cambridge University Press, is of great importance as being in the main the foundation of our modern Bible. Much care was expended on it, and it did much to bring the text, the marginal annotations, the italics, and the textual references into the condition in which we now have them. It had no real circulation, however, partly because a large portion of the impression was destroyed by fire, and partly because it was superseded by Dr. Blayney's edition, which soon followed.

That edition was published in 1769 by the Oxford University Press, and is commonly regarded as the standard from which modern Bibles are printed. Immense pains were taken with the marginal references, over thirty thousand new references being introduced; some of them very misleading, however, as based on a parallelism in the English where there is none in the original. Blayney was specially proud of his new chapter-headings, but that part of his work met with no acceptance. His was the last considerable effort to improve the ordinary editions of Scripture; and, like that of Dr. Paris, to whom he owed more than he allowed, his work is a monument of genuine industry and consecrated zeal. Yet in spite of the extraordinary pains which he took to avoid new errors and correct old ones, even his edition was far from faultless. In 1806, as many as 116 errors were pointed out in it, including the omission of a whole clause in Rev. 18. 22.

In this connection also, as in so many others in the history of the Authorized Version, we are impressed by the host of loyal workers who did their best to make it as perfect as it could be, and to commend it to the men of their time. Not a few of them were content to do their arduous work out of sight, satisfied if only they could thereby serve in the sacred cause. Scholars and artizans, those who were experts in the ancient tongues and those who were experts in their modern crafts, joined hands in the great and often toilsome endeavours.

BOOK IV

THE REVISION OF THE AUTHORIZED
VERSION

CHAPTER I

UNAUTHORIZED REVISIONS

'The pearl is of great price ; but even the casket is of exquisite beauty. The sword is of ethereal temper, and nothing cuts so keen as its double edge ; but there are jewels on the hilt, an exquisite inlaying on the scabbard. The shekels are of the purest ore ; but even the scrip which contains them is of a texture more curious than any which the artists of earth can fashion. The apples are gold, but even the basket is silver.'—DR. JAMES HAMILTON.

BOOK IV

THE REVISION OF THE AUTHORIZED VERSION

CHAPTER I

UNAUTHORIZED REVISIONS

WHAT has just been said regarding famous issues shows that revision has been going on from the first. Some of these issues are famous mainly because of the extent to which they were revisions. It has always been held to be the duty of Christian scholars to make the vernacular Scriptures as representative as possible of the original manuscripts. God must get our best, and those who read His Word must be brought as near to Him as possible. That grows out of the very conception of a translation. In his first preface, Tyndale laid this obligation on Bible students, that 'if they perceive in any place that the version has not attained unto the very sense of the tongue, or the very meaning of Scripture, or to have given the right English word, that they should put to their hands and amend it, remembering that so is their duty to do.'

It may be questioned, however, whether individual printers and private editors are at liberty to undertake this work of revision ; and there can be no question that it has sometimes been attempted on inadequate grounds, and done in foolish and even grotesque ways. In 1768, for example, Dr. Edward Harwood set himself to translate the New Testament 'with freedom, spirit, and elegance,'

and gave such renderings as 'the young lady is not 'dead,' in Mark 5. 39; and 'A gentleman of splendid 'family and opulent fortune had two sons'; 'The indulgent father, overcome by his blandishments, immediately, 'divided all his fortune betwixt them,' in Luke 15. 11, 12. There have even been attempts made to 'bowdlerize' the Scriptures. The question asked by Nicodemus in John 3. 4 has been refined into 'can he become an unborn 'infant of his mother a second time?' while 'unchaste 'and immodest gratifications' has been offered as an improvement on 'chambering and wantonness' in Romans 13. 13. It might not be out of place to remind those who like that sort of thing of the testimony of one of the most experienced teachers of girls in Great Britain: that she has never known the frankness of Scripture in regard to such matters do anything but good among her pupils, and that she has often been grateful for it.

But apart from such eccentricities and follies, an unauthorized revision of the Authorized Version has been going on from the first; and as far back as 1831 the public attention was drawn, by Mr. Curtis, of Islington, to the extent to which all modern reprints of Holy Scripture had departed from the original edition or editions of 1611. He declared that the result had been the great deterioration of our Vernacular Translation; but the subsequent publication of the 1611 text in the Oxford reprint of 1833 virtually vindicated the unauthorized revisions which had been made, by showing how impossible it was to go back to the unrevised edition. Not only so; but the discovery thus made of the extent to which the epoch-making work of King James's scholars had been patiently and reverently brought into a more consistent and presentable shape did much to strengthen the conviction which ultimately led to the preparation of our Revised Version. The feeling grew steadily, until for many it was overpowering, that it was an obvious duty to bring the gains of two centuries and a half of patient consecrated study and scholarly research within the reach of all. During the long period in which the Authorized Version had been pursuing its career of blessing without a rival, great stores of Biblical

learning had been accumulating, and the capacity of scholars for making use of the new light had been steadily growing, and it was felt that it should all be applied to the sacred cause of Bible translation. All the while, however, the unauthorized revision was going on.

The fact that the first two editions in 1611, which had been issued so simultaneously that the experts are still unable to agree as to which, if either, was actually first, differed in a multitude of minute details, as well as in some matters which were neither minute nor details, made it inevitable that emendations should be attempted ; and the process thus begun went on until the nineteenth century. Only those who take the trouble to compare an edition of 1611 with one now current can appreciate the extent to which this work of emendation was carried on, and as each revised edition in turn perpetrated its own new errors, finality was not easily attained. Some of the changes made were external, and dealt with the marginal notes, and references, and the chapter headings. Most of those, too, which dealt with the actual text were concerned with minute matters such as the employment of italics and the punctuation, and the spelling of proper names ; but in not a few cases the actual meaning was affected, although the worst errors of that sort, such as omitting or adding the powerful word 'not,' were usually too obvious to do much mischief.

Some of the departures from the original editions were due to blunders on the part of printers and the culpable carelessness of proof-readers ; and until as recently as 1830 there was often a deplorable lack of accuracy and care. As early as 1643, the Westminster Assembly made a report to Parliament on the subject of the great number of errors which had already crept into the editions then in use. But most of the changes were deliberately made. Of the first fifty years of the nineteenth century there were only nine which witnessed no attempt at revision. Dr. Scrivener, who made a special study of this feature of the history of the Authorized Version, and has compiled a list of changes which, including the Apocrypha, extends to twenty-three pages of his deeply-interesting volume entitled, *The*

Authorized Version of the English Bible of 1611, says that while some of the differences which he records must be imputed to oversight and negligence, from which no work of man is entirely free, much the greater part of them were deliberate changes, introduced silently and without authority by men whose very names are unknown. All the material differences between the 1611 editions and the Authorized Version as it is now in common use have been indicated in the margin of the Parallel Bible of 1885, with both Authorized and Revised Versions.

Many of the changes which have been made at one time or another, and have been adopted, consist in such emendations as inserting the preposition in the phrase 'all manner leprosy' in Lev. 14. 54, and elsewhere, and making it read 'all manner of leprosy.' In other cases the definite article has been introduced, so that we now have 'upon the earth' for 'upon earth'; 'in the battle' for 'in battle'; 'for the press' for 'for press'; and 'Thou art the Christ' for 'Thou art Christ.' Among the changes in the Gospels recorded by Dr. Scrivener are such as these: 'The word of Jesus,' since 1762, when so many emendations were made, for 'the words of Jesus,' in Matt. 26. 75; 'He ran and worshipped' for 'he came and worshipped,' since 1638 in Mark 5. 6; 'There is none good but one,' since 1638 for 'there is no man good, but one,' in Mark 10. 18; 'a son of Abraham' for 'the son of Abraham,' since 1762 in Luke 19. 9; 'at nought' for 'at naught,' since 1638 in Luke 23. 11; 'than his Lord' for 'than the Lord,' since 1762 in John 15. 20; 'because he not only,' since 1629 for 'not only because he' in John 5. 18.

Such changes as 'godly edifying,' for 'edifying,' in 1 Tim. 1. 4.; 'hath not the Son of God,' for 'hath not the Son,' in 1 John 5. 12; and 'which was a Jewess,' for 'which was a Jew,' in Acts 24. 24, are interesting; as well as the wholesale fashion in which proper names have been dealt with. In the New Testament, for example, we have Apollos for Apollo.; Stephen for Steven; Moses for Moyses; Cain for Kain; Nain for Naim; Jerusalem for Hierusalem.; Jericho for Hiericho; and many others.

In his Cambridge Paragraph Bible, Scrivener himself introduced some further emendations of his own, principally in the Apocrypha, which was the least well done section in 1611. Among other changes he gives 'mercy's sake' for 'mercies' sake' in three passages in the Psalms; 'strain out a gnat' for 'strain at a gnat,' in Matt. 23. 24, following in this the versions of the English Bible prior to the Authorized Version; 'ye believe not' for 'ye believed not,' in John 10. 25; and 'hope' for 'faith' in Hebrews 10. 23.

In more recent times, various unauthorized revisions of a different sort have frequently appeared, such as Weymouth's Version of the New Testament in Modern Speech, and the translations which accompany many of our modern commentaries. Not a few of these have been of great service to the cause of Bible Study, and have helped to bring their readers nearer than ever to the inexhaustible fullness of the Divine Word.

CHAPTER II

THE INCEPTION AND PREPARATION OF THE
REVISED VERSION

'The Bible is like an ever-flowing fountain. Take what we will, and as much as we will, we ever leave more than we take to satisfy the wants of others. Neither the writers nor the thinkers of any one age can exhaust its fullness. The books of men have their day, and then grow obsolete. God's Word is like Himself, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Time passes over it, but it ages not. Its power is as fresh as if God spake it but yesterday.'—DR. PAYNE SMITH.

CHAPTER II

THE INCEPTION AND PREPARATION OF THE REVISED VERSION

FROM the first, as has just been shown, unauthorized revision of the Authorized Version had been going on, and on the whole with advantage to the readers of the Word. Even those who denounced a practice which at first sight seems so improper, were silenced when the Oxford reprint of 1833 showed what had actually been achieved. Within thirty-four years of the first appearance of the Authorized Version, a definite revision of it had been suggested in the House of Commons ; but it was soon found out that nothing better could be hoped for, then at any rate. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, the minds of many scholars were turned to some systematic revision, and various partial private translations were actually made, with varying success, by several scholars. As the century wore on, the desire for a Revised Version deepened ; and early in the year 1856 motions in favour of such an undertaking were made both in Parliament and in Convocation. Nothing came of these, however, except in so far as they turned men's minds to the possibilities of the situation. The romantic discovery of the great Codex Sinaiticus at Mount Sinai. by Tischendorf, naturally quickened the movement, and increased the desire of many to set about the work of revision at once in a worthy fashion ; in order that the whole community might be able to walk in the fuller light of modern discovery and scholarly attainments.

It was not that any responsible scholars thought that the Authorized Version was seriously inaccurate or misleading, but that many believed that it might be made even more perfect than it was ; and they knew that no changes which were made on the authority of the new manuscripts, or as the result of modern research, could possibly imperil the faith, or indeed have any bearing on any of the primary truths of the Gospel. They reminded the nation of the significant fact that not one of the great Codices had been available in 1611 ; and insisted that it was the bounden duty of modern scholarship to put the ordinary English reader as nearly as possible on a level with the reader of the original tongues. Nor would they admit that this could be sufficiently or effectively done by any such device as footnotes. Some of those, indeed, who were forward to acknowledge the incomparable merits and charm of the Authorized Version were convinced that it was only by wise and reverent revision that it could assimilate the new treasures which God in His providence had brought to light since the days of King James.

It was not, however, till February, 1870, that definite action was taken. It was then agreed by the Convocation of Canterbury, on the motion of Bishop Wilberforce, to appoint a Committee to report on the desirableness of a revision of the Authorized Version, whether by marginal notes or otherwise. This Committee reported in May of the same year, and it was then decided ' that Convocation should nominate a body of its own members to undertake the work of revision, who shall be at liberty to invite the co-operation of any eminent for scholarship to whatever nation or religious body they belong.' Soon thereafter two Companies were appointed for the revision of the Old and New Testaments respectively.

The chairman of the Old Testament Company was Dr. Harold Browne, Bishop of Winchester ; while Dr. Ellicott, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, presided over the New Testament Company. Over sixty scholars took part in the work, a larger number than had ever engaged in such work before. They were not only representative of the best scholarship of their time, and

abundantly qualified for their work ; they were representative of all shades of theological opinion, Baptist and Methodist sitting side by side with Episcopalian and Presbyterian in an altogether unique fashion. Not only was the flower of English scholarship to be found among the Revisers : Scotland was represented by no fewer than thirteen of her most distinguished Biblical students, and had thus an opportunity of at last removing the old reproach that she had done nothing worthy of herself and her religious yearnings in the department of Bible translation into the vernacular. American scholars, too, were in active co-operation with their brethren on this side of the Atlantic, and took no small share in the proceedings. Their colleagues in their Preface bear testimony to the ' care, vigilance, and accuracy ' of their fellow-labourers across the seas. The work of the American Revisers was, indeed, so important, and has led to such developments, as to call for consideration by itself.

The instructions of the Revisers were that they should introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the Authorized Version consistently with faithfulness ; and limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorized and earlier English Versions. No change was to be made or retained in the text on the final revision by either Company, unless two-thirds of those present approved of it ; and probably this rule was responsible for some of the results to which most exception has been taken. There are many indications, for example, that the needful two-thirds majority for changes was much more difficult to attain in the Old Testament Company than in the New ; a fact which makes the marginal notes of the Old Testament of special importance.

The Revisers began their work in June, 1870 ; their New Testament appeared in 1881, and their complete work in 1885. That they did their work well, will be admitted not only by those who think the revision of the New Testament too revolutionary or that of the Old Testament too conservative, but even by those who think that the Old Testament Revisers were too revolutionary or those of the New Testament too conservative. What-

ever may be the ultimate fate of what they did, and whatever may be thought of its value and significance, or of the relative value of the work done by the respective Companies, what they accomplished is entitled to the respect due to an earnest and loyal attempt to get nearer the exact meaning of the Holy Scriptures; and to present to the English-speaking peoples the approved results of textual criticism, of the discovery of formerly unknown manuscripts and versions, and of a fuller acquaintance with the sacred languages.

Among the arguments which had been urged on behalf of this revision being undertaken, there were some which could not be readily set aside. It was pointed out that apart altogether from the progress made by scholarship and Comparative Philology, there were some two hundred words in the Authorized Version which had changed their meaning since 1611, and others which no ordinary reader could understand; and that there were even phrases which tended to give a wrong turn to the meaning unless there was much care and considerable knowledge. It was also pointed out that, from the very nature of the case, as concerning God's revelation of Himself and His purpose of grace to men which the best men have, the fullest light, the most accurate information, the most thorough-going research, must be devoted to the work of making the vernacular Scriptures as accurate and luminous as possible. It was also undeniable that textual criticism as applied to the Greek New Testament, more especially through the discovery of the new codices and the labours of a succession of great scholars, had resulted in the construction of a more accurate Greek Testament than was available in 1611. On the side of the Old Testament, too, it was equally undeniable that Hebrew scholarship had made conspicuous advances in modern times.

As regards the results of the Revision, considerable changes were made both on the text and on its external form, as presented to English readers. The old divisions into chapters and verses were noted only in the margin, and the text was printed in paragraphs like an ordinary book. The old chapter-headings were left out altogether. In the text itself the number of variations

in the New Testament from the Authorized Version was between thirty-five and thirty-six thousand. There were over five thousand variations from the Greek Text of 1611. Many felt that there might have been fewer alterations without sacrifice of accuracy; while some of those made were greatly resented—such as the omission of the Doxology of the Lord's Prayer, and the new form of words so familiar as, 'On earth peace, good 'will toward men.' But the Revisers had to be loyal to the text which had approved itself to them. They also claimed that what had been lost in style by rendering the same Greek words throughout by the same English words was gained in accuracy, which is even more important.

Fewer changes were made in the Old Testament. In Job, which is the most difficult of the Old Testament books, there were only 1,389 alterations; while in the book of Jeremiah there were 1,278; and in the book of Psalms, 2,094. This was probably due in part to the strong feeling which had been shown in the interval regarding the number of changes in the New Testament; but it was chiefly due to the fact that there were no changes in the Old Testament text corresponding to those which had been made on the text of the New Testament. There is to all intents only one text of the Old Testament, and our Hebrew Bible is practically the same as that in use in the time of our Lord. The New Testament Revisers were obliged to construct a Greek text which they thereafter translated; but the Old Testament Revisers had practically to confine themselves to the Masoretic text, and put anything of value from the Septuagint and elsewhere in the margin. The consequence was that the alterations on the Old Testament were due, not to textual changes, but to an increased knowledge of Hebrew and of textual criticism, combined with a more thorough study of the Septuagint and the Targums, together with the Vulgate and other ancient versions.

The changes made throughout fall into four classes, which need not be elaborated. There were those which arose from the adoption of new and better authenticated readings in the original. There were those which were

the result of the original having previously been misunderstood. There were those due to the disappearance of obsolete words. And, finally, there were those due to the application of the ruling principle that the same words in the original should be consistently represented by the same English words. Whether there were too many or too few, is a matter of opinion or of feeling ; but no one can study those which were made, side by side with the Authorized Version, without finding that new light is being thrown on the sacred page, and that new depths are being discovered in the Divine Word.

CHAPTER III
RECEPTION AND SUBSEQUENT CAREER

The Bible is like a wide and beautiful landscape seen afar off, dim and confused ; but a good telescope will bring it near, and spread out all its rocks, and trees, and flowers, and verdant fields, and winding rivers at one's very feet. That telescope is the Spirit's teaching.'—DR. THOMAS CHALMERS.

CHAPTER III

RECEPTION AND SUBSEQUENT CAREER

THE interest which gathered round the publication of the Revised New Testament on May 17, 1881, all through the English-speaking world, was altogether unparalleled in the history of publications. Long before it appeared, the curiosity and anxiety of the public had been raised to the highest pitch ; and all sorts of means, both fair and foul, had been employed in vain in order to obtain advance copies. The most elaborate arrangements were made for the first day's sales ; but although more than a million copies had been issued by the Oxford Press, and a large, although smaller, number by the Cambridge Press, that was quite inadequate to supply the demand. One London bookseller sold fifteen thousand copies during that memorable day,; and altogether some indication was given of the place which the Bible still occupies in the community. As soon as possible, too, it was distributed in the ends of the earth.

The excitement on May 18, 1885, when the complete Revised Bible was sent out, was not nearly so great as it had been four years before ; but the interest was still very great and widespread, and the sale was enormous. One writer at the time declared that no one could any longer say that religion is less powerful in our time than it was in the days of the Puritans. If we may judge by the ordinary test of the sales, alike of the Revised Version and the Authorized, the English Bible is still immeasurably the first book in popular esteem. Such sales could hardly continue year after year if the Scriptures were quite as much superseded as many suggest or fear.

It is probable that not even the most sanguine admirers of the Revised Version expected that it would be accepted at once and on all hands as the English Bible, and be raised to the supreme place occupied so long by the Authorized Version. To begin with, there was the ordinary conservatism of human nature to be overcome, although against that there might be set the instinctive love of change, and the faith in the new, which characterize so many. Not only so; but this was no case where the friends of the old were obscurantists, who said, 'The old is better,' or 'The old is good.' It was pre-eminently a case where the old was good, and where it had become an integral part of the life of the nation at its best.

As a matter of fact, the reception which has been accorded to the Revised Version has been very mixed, and probably few even of its friends are now sanguine that it will ultimately obtain the first place in the land. The different standard set up by the two Companies has not helped matters. Some hold that if the New Testament Company had been as conservative as the Old, there would have been a hearty acceptance of their joint work. Others hold that if the Old Testament Company had been as courageous as the New, the whole would have commended itself far more than it has done. The fact, however, remains that now, after the New Testament has been in the field for thirty years and the Old Testament for twenty-six, the supremacy of the Authorized Version can hardly be said to have been seriously shaken. The sale of the Revised Version has been steadily but slowly increasing for some years past, and it clearly has its public; but the University Presses still issue annually as they did ten years ago, fully ten times as many of the Authorized Version as of the Revised. And it has to be borne in mind that they alone issue copies of the Revised Version, whereas many others are issuing copies of the Authorized.

In 1899, Convocation authorized the use of the Revised Version in churches, leaving its adoption to the discretion of the clergy, a course very much the same as that adopted by the Methodist Churches, and a folio edition was prepared for that purpose. Within recent years,

too, the British and Foreign Bible Society, who for long sold only the Authorized Version, have begun to sell the Revised Bible in three editions, in addition to an edition of the New Testament alone. The New Testament is sold at a cost of fourpence, and the cheapest of the Bibles is tenpence. The likelihood therefore is that the two versions will go on their way side by side, as friendly rivals, although some still anticipate that the Revised Version will sooner or later come into general use as its merits are recognized.

It is interesting at this juncture to compare the present state of affairs with the expectation of Dr. Scrivener, who spent such loving care on the Authorized Version and its subsequent reprints, and modern representatives. Writing in 1884, three years, that is, after the Revised New Testament had appeared, his anticipation was that the two 'are destined to run together a race of generous and friendly rivalry for the space of at least one generation, before the elder of the two shall be superseded in the affections of not a few devout persons, who, in so grave a matter as the daily use of Holy Scripture, shall prove slow to adopt changes which yet they will not doubt to be made, on the whole, for the better.' The one generation, however, has come and gone, and there can be no question that the result has not been that to which the great scholar thus looked forward.

It by no means follows, however, that the work of the Revisers has been in any sense thrown away, even if it never obtain the supremacy. Both versions may do their best work side by side, and there are frequent indications in sermons and addresses and many modern writings that the Revised Version is being largely used for private study, even by those who still cling fondly to the Authorized, and will never consent to let it go. Probably the vast majority of those who know the facts would assent to Dr. Sanday's claim for the work of the Revisers, that 'adventitious growths which in the course of centuries had found a place in the very imperfect text used by the old translators have been removed; true readings substituted for false, and probable readings at least placed alongside those that are doubtful. The

' meaning of the original has been more accurately rendered. Much that used to be obscure has now been made plain, and that which was comparatively plain has been made plainer. Many a fine shade of thought has been brought out, which would otherwise have passed unnoticed.' The only question, Dr. Sanday holds, is to what extent and whether the gain may not, in some greater or less degree, be accompanied with loss. It is quite possible, however, that readers may be ready to acknowledge that, especially in the Prophets and the Epistles, the gain far exceeds the loss, and be anxious to avail themselves of all the gain, especially in their private study, and yet be altogether unwilling to see the Authorized Version follow the Geneva version into the limbo of old Bibles which have now no more than an antiquarian interest.

It may be noticed, too, that there are scholars who hold that the Revisers have failed to such an extent to bring out the true meaning in many instances, that the loss would be greater than the gain were the new version to replace the old. One of these, dealing specially with the New Testament, in the pages of *The Expositor*, after giving what he held to be instances where there had been such failure, and declaring that there are minor inaccuracies on every page, goes on to say: 'The Authorized Version, it is true, also has its blemishes and imperfections; but they fade almost into insignificance in comparison with the serious errors of the Revised. The Version of King James's translators is more true to the genius of the English language, and characterized in more directions than one by more profound scholarship. Until both Text and Translation be made much more perfect, it involves much less wrong and much less loss to the Churches to retain the old Version.'

Another scholar, also in the pages of *The Expositor*, subjects the work done by the Revisers of the Old Testament to an unfavourable criticism. 'The Hebrew text has been left in its original state of questionable integrity. Obscure passages for the most part remain as unintelligible as the lover of "that sweet

“ word Mesopotamia ” can desire.’ ‘ The task of textual emendation they have frankly declined. Palpable mis-readings remain.’ ‘ The timorous conservatism of their Old Testament will vex those who desired a translation on a level with modern erudition. Their pigeon-Jacobean diction, in both Old Testament and New, will always provoke disparaging comparison with the easy rhythm of our great English classic. The one permanently valuable outcome of this singular episode in the history of literature is Westcott and Hort’s Greek Testament text, which is recognized by Continental critics as a credit to English scholarship.’ ‘ We, of course, take no notice of its side-notes, which we cannot allow to discount the final decision the Revisers lay before the public in their text. By that they must stand or fall.’ ‘ The Revised Version does not represent unbiassed Hebrew scholarship.’

The reception given to the Revised Version has thus been somewhat mixed, alike on the part of scholars and the general public ; but it would be a poor compliment to the Authorized Version to resent the presence of the Revised Version, or to seek in any way to limit its sphere of influence. It is a great achievement of British and American scholarship, and a valuable commentary ; and all Bible students should use the two versions side by side. The Old Testament marginal notes are of undoubted value, and it is well at times that men’s minds should be taken past any and every form of words, even the most venerable, to the Word itself. The Holy Scriptures must never be identified with any version, even the best. On the other hand, even in view of all the Revised Version has achieved in the matter of precision as regards the true force of tenses and compound verbs, and the distinctive sense of prepositions ; as well as in the fidelity with which it exhibits new shades of meaning, there is no obscurantism in expressing the wish that it will never supersede the Authorized Version, but that the two streams will continue long to flow on side by side as they are doing now, to the advantage of those who study the Record of the Divine Revelation in the history of men.

CHAPTER IV
AMERICA AND THE WORK OF REVISION

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.—
PSALM 119. 105.

CHAPTER IV

AMERICA AND THE WORK OF REVISION

THE first American edition of the Authorized Version seems to have been issued in the year 1782. Until then the monopolists at home had been able to prevent any infringement of their privileges on the part of the New England printers. After the establishment of the Republic, however, anyone who chose to do so was at liberty to print Bibles ; the result being, as a Committee of theirs discovered, that the lack of supervision led to even greater variations than in the homeland.

From 1847 till 1851 an American Committee of seven scholars were engaged in an attempt at revision, which was projected by the American Bible Society, but with little outcome. The fruits of their labours were set aside by those who appointed them 'on the ground of alleged 'want of constitutional authority, and popular dissatis-
'faction with a number of the changes made.' The only result of their toil remains in the editions of the Bible published by the American Bible Society since 1860.

When our Revised Version was arranged for in 1870, American scholars were invited to co-operate with the British Revisers, who from time to time transmitted to them the several portions of their work, and received from them in return their criticism and suggestions. Dr. Philip Schaff, of New York, who visited this country in connection with the work in 1872, was President of the whole American Revision Committee ; while Dr. William Henry Green, of Princeton, was chairman of the Old Testament Company, and Dr. Theodore D. Woolsey, of

Yale College, chairman of the New Testament Company. Nowhere was the excitement over the appearance of the Revised Version greater than in America. It was the first version of the English Bible which the New World had helped to produce, and enormous interest was taken in it. In order to put Chicago on a level with New York, a Chicago newspaper actually transmitted the four Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistle to the Romans by telegraph on the morning of its appearance.

Effect was given to many of the suggestions which were received from across the Atlantic, and various matters regarding which perfect agreement could not be attained were printed as an appendix. With all their reverence for the ancient in literature, the American scholars naturally felt freer to introduce changes than their British brethren ; and in the year 1901 an American Revised Bible was issued, which, however, is not allowed to be sold in Great Britain, in deference to the rights of the University Presses in the British Revised Version.

In connection with the joint labours of the British and American Revisers, it had been agreed that the British Companies should have a decisive vote, with the proviso that during a period of fourteen years every copy of the Revised Bible should contain the appendices with the American preferences. On their part, the American Committee pledged themselves that for the same period they would sanction no other editions of the Revised Version than those issued by the University Presses in England. The American Companies, unlike their British brethren, continued their organization, and latterly set themselves to prepare and publish a revision of their own, which accordingly was done ten years ago ; Messrs. Thomas Nelson & Sons having the sole right of issue.

In many respects this American Revision goes beyond merely giving effect to the American preferences as set forth in the British appendices. Very naturally, being no longer trammelled, they have incorporated many additional emendations which they had formerly favoured but which they did not insist on being put on record ; as well as other changes which they deem improvements. They have even returned in some instances to the readings of the

Authorized Version, which they considered had been needlessly abandoned, sometimes to the injury of the sense as well as of the sound. The paragraph divisions were revised, grammar and punctuation were dealt with in order to make them conform more to modern usage, column-headings were re-introduced, and some parallel references were added in the margin, while slight changes were made in the form of the titles of some of the books.

The changes made in the New Testament are neither numerous nor important. The rendering of the coins which are mentioned has been altered, and a few archaisms have been discarded ; but there are many alterations in the Old Testament. We find 'Jehovah' substituted for 'LORD' and 'GOD' on the ground that a Jewish superstition ought no longer to dominate the English or any other version ; while 'sheol' appears uniformly for 'the grave,' 'the pit,' and 'hell.' The use of 'shall' and 'will,' and other matters of the same sort, have also been dealt with. Very many of the alterations made appeared to be demanded by consistency. 'Justice' had already been substituted for 'judgement,' and for the same reason 'ordinance' has now been substituted for 'judgement' where the word denotes not a judicial sentence, threatened or inflicted, but a law of action. It is also claimed that the distinction between 'stranger,' 'foreigner,' and 'sojourner' has now been made consistently manifest. Nearly five-sixths of the references in the margin of our Revision to the readings of the ancient versions have been removed, on the ground that though the date of these is more ancient than any extant manuscript of the Hebrew Bible, they are all translations from the Hebrew, and there is no means of verifying the text from which they were made.

It still remains to be seen whether the American Revised Version will fare any better than ours ; but few who know it will deny that it is a reverent and scholarly effort to bring its readers more closely into contact with the exact thought of the sacred writers. It is as worthy of our grateful admiration as any of its predecessors in the old country.

CONCLUSION

‘What shall it profit a man if he shall gain a telescope and lose his sight?’—JOWETT.

CONCLUSION

IN the foregoing chapters we have seen something of the history of the Authorized Version, as well as something of the previous translations to which it served itself heir, and of which it was the glorious fruit. We have also seen something of the translation which in our own time has taken its place alongside of it, to be its friend and fellow-worker in bringing men and women ever nearer the very mind of God. And clearly, in view of all we have seen, it would be a blunder to think of our Authorized Version as merely one translation out of many. To all intents and purposes it is the English Bible for all sorts and conditions of men. As one of the Revisers put it, it can only be superseded in that sphere of fuller truth where we shall know even as we are known.

It is indeed an inspiring story which we have been tracing. It matters not where we look, it tells of mighty men of God whose work endures and cannot but endure. In the far past there were workers like the truly royal Alfred, who sought to make the law of the Lord the law of the land, and to found his government on the Divine Word ; and Ælfric the Archbishop, who nearly a thousand years ago wrote words which are as applicable now as they were then : ‘ Happy is he, then, who reads the Scriptures, if he convert the words into actions. The whole of the Scriptures are written for our salvation, and by them we obtain the knowledge of the truth.’ As for John Wiclif and William Tyndale, words cannot set forth all we owe to them. Wiclif was indeed the Doctor Evangelicus :

For Christe’s love and His apostles twelve,
He taught—and first he folwede it himselve.

To Tyndale, *primus inter pares*, we are indebted most of all. His piety, learning, and courage, all led on to the great Divine end which he attained ; and he builded better than he knew. A Scots philosopher has said that all philosophy since is just Plato rightly understood, and every new translation of the English Bible since has just been the principles of Tyndale more thoroughly applied in fuller knowledge and clearer light. And what shall we say of Caxton, who laid his printing press on the altar, and, through his amended *Golden Legend*, made England familiar with the Word of God ; of Thomas Cromwell, who used his great position and ran the risk of the despot's wrath by encouraging one translator after another to pursue his work ; or of Miles Coverdale, the self-effacing man of God, who was ready to serve in any way if only Christ and His Gospel might be made known? As for later days, time would fail us to tell of the wisdom and perseverance of those who in happier times made use of their scholarly repose and growing light to dedicate their all to the spread of the Word, which alone can scatter the world's darkness and win men for God. The Authorized Version does not gather round one man's name, as most of its predecessors did ; but it tells of the dedication of great gifts and acquirements, of much good sense and foresight and co-operation, for the glory of God and the well-being of men.

Nor should the consecrated labours of the unknown copyists of earlier times or of equally unknown printers and binders of later days be altogether overlooked. Many of them, who were only tradesmen, entered on their work in the spirit of a profession, and their names are written in the Book of Life. Purvey had it long ago that ' a translator hath great need to study well the sense both before and after, and then also he hath need to live a clean life, and be full devout in prayers, and have not his wit occupied about worldly things that the Holy Spirit, author of all wisdom and cunning and truth, dress him for his work and suffer him not to err ' ; and so it has been that a great multitude have laboured for us in the Lord in wisdom and cleanness, and we have entered into their labours, that they without us should not be made perfect.

The entire record shows how confident believers in God and His precious Word may be that no change or discovery can touch the foundations of their faith, or affect His revelation of grace. Those who tremble for the Ark of the Covenant must be singularly deaf to what history is saying to them. All the changes which have been made since Wiclif's version first saw the light have left it not only unscathed but mightier than ever. No doctrine in it has been affected. Its general bearing is exactly what it has always been. No book can stand investigation as the Bible can. It invites inquiry as no other writing does. Not only has nothing material been touched ; the record has shown that no honest revision can touch any article of the faith. No enemy can prevail against it. No weapon formed against it can prosper. It is the anvil which has worn out many a hammer ; and so it shall ever be, for it is the Book which fathoms the depths and satisfies the needs of the heart of man as only the Word of the Living God can.

In a very striking fashion, too, the record has shown how truly the Bible is a book made to be translated. As has been well said, the Bible of all books loses least of its force and dignity and beauty by being translated into other languages wherever the version made is not erroneous. One version may excel another because it is more expressive, or more majestic, or more Divinely simple ; but in every worthy version the Bible contains the sublimest thoughts expressed in plain and fitting words. It was written for the whole world at first, and not for any single nation or age ; and although its thoughts are higher than ordinary thoughts, they are not so because they have been elaborated by the working of abstraction or reflection, but because they have come from the primal fountain of all truth. To translate the Bible, as one of the Puritans has it, is to draw the Sword of the Spirit from its scabbard ; while as another of the Puritans put it, the fact that our Lord and His Apostles quote from the Septuagint, even where it differs from the Hebrew, reminds us that the sense of Scripture is the gold and the words only the purse, and that it is the sense we must have if our deepest needs are to be fathomed and satisfied.

The entire record is one of self-sacrificing devotion to truth and duty, and not a few of those who have done most in the sacred cause have had to adventure their liberty and their life. It has often been remarked how many of the workers in this field had to die for the truth ; but it is by these things that men live : and the heroic story ought to be far better known than it is, that it may quicken and encourage those who are following after. In these days of the Tercentenary there ought to be a fresh sense of gratitude to the long line of workers who gave us of their best, and to whom we owe so much. It is a very precious inheritance which they have handed on to us, and it involves vast responsibilities. There is always the danger that what was sought for and greatly prized when it cost much, and could only be attained through great daring, may be neglected when it is offered freely and can be had for nothing. ' He hath not dealt ' so with any nation ' ; and those who wish our public and private life as a people to be clean ; those who wish to preserve the sanctity of the Sabbath and the purity of the home ; and those who wish to maintain the integrity of the Empire as great and free, should all make much of our English Bible, and do everything they can to induce others to do the same. In that way alone can the nation be saved from social unrest and industrial dispeace and bound together in a helpful unity.

It is to be feared that there is too great a tendency to read about the Bible, instead of reading the Bible itself. But it is round the Word itself that the promises gather. It is the Word itself that is seed, the engrafted Word which is able to save the soul. It is in the Word itself that the Divine power inheres. No number of magazine articles, no matter how interesting they may be, or however artistically illustrated, can serve as Bible substitutes ; nor can any religious stories, no matter how natural their characters or well-pointed their moral, take the place of the actual study of the Word of God itself as set forth in the Scriptures. Alike in the home and the school and the church, everything ought to be done to encourage systematic study of the Bible ; and that not as a task,

but as a delight. Nothing will go very far wrong where the Living Word is read and honoured ; but without that, nothing else will very much avail. Loyalty to the Authorized Version has no meaning unless it be read and obeyed. The desire to be up-to-date and in touch with the latest revision and the latest results is no better than a fad, if it expends itself in discussion about tenses or chapter-headings or the removal of archaic phrases and obsolete words. Not only so, but there should be far more strenuous insistence on and practice of the Reformation doctrine of the Testimony of the Holy Spirit. He Who gave the Word at first, and has overruled all the translations for His own glory, must guide us into the depths, if it is to mean for us all it ought to mean. We only know in practice that the Bible is inspired when it inspires us, and an interest in the Book must not be mistaken for an interest in the Book's Author.

Daily Bible Readings are now circulated everywhere in enormous numbers, and doubtless very many of them are loyally read, and prayer should continually be offered that they may all be used and blessed. As for such a pledge as that of the Christian Endeavour Societies, that some portion of the Bible will be read every day, eternity alone can reveal how much it means. The most admirable text-books, too, are now to be had, which throw light on the Word from every quarter, and the best of them are available for all who have received an ordinary English education. The most useful of these perhaps are those which do not profess to do more than deal with the text, its vocabulary and constructions, in such a way as to let the reader know exactly what the sacred writers said and meant, and leave him there. Where that is done without prejudice or bias, it is better even than the 'without note or comment' ideal, which has so much to say for itself, inasmuch as it concentrates attention on Scripture itself and not on any human expositor of it. Such text-books, whether for schools and colleges or for private study, ought also to be followed with wistful prayer by all who wish to see the Kingdom of God coming in the midst.

The record shows that there have been ebbs as well as

flows in the popular appreciation of the Word. When John Lewis wrote his *History of the Translations of the Bible*, in 1738, he was very much discouraged by the way in which the Bible was then neglected. But the Methodist Revival was at hand to exalt the Scriptures anew ; and both the Universities were ere long to issue new editions of the Authorized Version, on which endless trouble had been bestowed. The story of Mary Jones, too, whose romantic love for the Bible led to the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, shows how scarce Bibles were then, even in parts of the United Kingdom. But once again Revival was at hand, and God's Word was ere long scattered broadcast over the land as it had never been before. There is always a tendency in such matters to think of the former days as better than our own ; but there has probably never been anything in all the history of Bible publication to equal the interest which gathered round the appearance of the Revised Version of the New Testament, only thirty years ago. Indeed, it is not easy to harmonize the conviction of many that the Bible is neglected as it was not formerly, with the fact that its sale is so great and is steadily increasing. A merely conventional or traditionary sale would soon show signs of exhaustion and decline.

There were always those who did not read the Bible, even in the good old times. At the very time when the crowds were gathering round the 'chained Bibles,' to hear the Word read, there were whole districts in England, in Cornwall and Devonshire and the North for example, where the people would have none of it. It is probable that only a minority of the nation then desired an English version. A preacher of that period says, 'How mercifully, how plentifully, and purely hath God sent His Word to us here in England. Again, how unthankfully, how rebelliously, how carnally and unwillingly do we receive it.' Both in England and Scotland there were some who required penal enactments and royal proclamations to induce them to purchase copies of the Bible ; and what was bought on these terms would probably not be very gratefully read. It is true that these edicts were sometimes in favour of particular versions ; but,

then as now, only those made much of the Bible who were anxious to know God and His way of salvation, and to discover how they might be forgiven and delivered from the power of indwelling sin. In any case, it is certain that there never were so many copies of the Scriptures in the homes and the hands of the people as there are now, and we should give God thanks for that, and make the most of it.

If we were to try to imagine what the nation would be without the Bible, we would have a new sense of what it has done and is still doing in the land. One of the impressive features of the great waterless wastes of Australia is the terrible silence which prevails. There are no singing birds or brawling brooks, no rustling branches or sounds of beasts, and it is said that only those who have been through it can have any conception of what it means. For those who have been left in these solitudes this silence becomes an all-pervading horror which has driven men mad. But how infinitely more terrible it would have been had there been no voice of God speaking to us from the dim unknown. Strauss has told of the horror which overwhelmed him when he came to the conclusion that amid all the voices of earth there was none which spoke for God; yea, that in all the universe there was no God who could speak to men. He says that when he found himself a helpless creature amid the whirl and hiss of the jagged iron wheels and the deafening crash of the ponderous hammers, the sense of abandonment was very awful. He was looking up into the heavens, in the imagery of another German, and seeing only an empty socket, ghastly, silent, and mocking, where there should have been a Father's eye.

But thanks be to God, this is not a silent land, a land without a Bible, and it is a tender gracious eye which we see when we look up to our God. The well is deep, but we have wherewith to draw up the living life-giving water. The English Bible is still fresh and mighty, even if it has archaic or obsolete words. It has waxed old, but it has not decayed. Its youth abides, and the sun never sets on its sphere of influence. Many volumes

have perished since it first saw the light ; but its message is as modern as ever. It has not only kept up-to-date, it has anticipated every need of men, and still responds to every new demand. Blessed are they that walk in the light of it ; and blessed are they who spread its light. 'They shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles ; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.'

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